



# Foundation Stage Policy

December 2024

Version 2.3

Review date: December 2026

## Version Control

Date	Version	Changes	Changes made by
Summer 2016	1		
June 2018	2		
September 2020  November 2020	2.1	Equality Statement added 'Introduction' – principles updated 'Inclusion' section – minor update (wording) 'The Foundation Stage' section – updated 'The role of parents and carers' section – included use of WOW moment stickers Approved at Progress and Attainment committee meeting on 16.11.2020	J Twyford
November 2022	2.2	Added information on Reception Baseline Assessment Approved at Curriculum meeting 14.11.22 and circulated to all staff	J Twyford
December 2024  March 2025 June 2025	2.3	Introduction – minor update (wording) Equality – added school motto and added mental health focus Play in the Early Years Foundation Stage – updated Updated wording throughout document Assessment – updated to include Evidence Me. Removal of data submission to LA. Role of Parents/Carers - updated to include Evidence Me. Approved at Curriculum meeting 20/01/2025. Sustainability Statement Added.	C Hall/ L Newell

## Introduction

The Foundation Stage extends from birth to the end of the reception year. Entry into our school is at the beginning of the school year in which the children turn five (although compulsory schooling does not begin until the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday).

The Foundation Stage is important in its own right, and also in preparing children for later schooling. By the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) it is expected that most children will have met the Early Learning Goals.

Children joining our school will have some prior knowledge of the EYFS this could be from a home learning environment, nursery or child minder.

The early years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- provides a strong foundation for our pupils to progress through education and life;
- it builds on what our children already know and can do;
- quality and consistency in teaching and learning, allowing all pupils to make progress and ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- providing our children with a variety of learning experiences;
- content that matches the needs and interests of our pupils and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- it provides a rich and stimulating environment.

## Equality

At Park Hill Infant School, we have always taught our pupils about equality with our school motto 'All Different, All Equal, All Achieving' and this remains an important part of our school. We also teach them to be Kind, Positive, Respectful, Courageous and Honest through our School Values. We ensure that we always celebrate diversity, promote equality, demonstrate respect and stand together to challenge all forms of discriminatory language and behaviour.

We recognise that education is a vital tool for powerful, permanent and informative change. Our continuously evolving curriculum demonstrates our determination to use education to tackle various issues e.g., inequality and mental health. We strive to ensure our curriculum and supporting resources reflect values of inclusivity, diversity,

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equality and belonging. We do this by planning to meet the individual needs of all our children regardless of gender, special educational needs, race, religion and diverse linguistic backgrounds.

### **Sustainability and the Curriculum**

We aim for our pupils to become passionate about their role in protecting the natural world. Our curriculum provides opportunities to develop a broad knowledge and understanding of nature, sustainability and climate change. We support pupils to translate this knowledge across all curriculum areas into positive action.

### **Aims and objectives**

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

- personal, social and emotional development;
- positive attitudes and dispositions towards learning;
- social skills;
- attention skills and persistence;
- communication and language;
- reading and writing;
- mathematics;
- understanding the world including an understanding of different beliefs;
- physical development;
- creative development.

We ensure that the children are provided with a broad and balanced curriculum that is both enjoyable and educational. We believe that this will provide children with a positive attitude towards education and develop an interest in lifelong learning.

In the Summer term, children are assessed using the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) which are set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework 2021.

### **Teaching and learning style**

The features of the effective teaching and learning in our school are defined in our school policy and have equal importance in EYFS and Key Stage 1.

We know and understand how important Reception is, and therefore we focus on these aspects for our school:

- the partnership between teachers and parents/carers that helps our children to feel secure at school, and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- providing our children with a wide variety of learning experiences throughout the year both in and out the classroom;
- the instilling and role modelling of our school values (respect, honesty, courage, kindness and positivity)
- the understanding 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 explanations, 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;
- opportunities for children to work within the outdoor environment at all times during the school day to ensure children experience all weathers, seasons and the natural world;
- the identification, through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are shared with parents and carers;
- the relationships between our school and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining our school;
- the clear aims of our work, and the regular monitoring of our work to evaluate and improve it;
- the identification of training needs for all adults working in the Foundation Stage.

### Play in the Early Years Foundation Stage

**Play is crucial** for developing children's communication and language skills, as well as supporting their learning and wellbeing. Play is **essential** for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults.

### Resources

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that provides the children with a range of experiences and 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 as well as their own interest and curiosity. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning.

### Inclusion at the Foundation Stage

We believe that all our children are unique. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning (see our policy on inclusion).

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, we set realistic and challenging expectations relating to the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of EYFS. 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 and experiences that build on and extend the children's knowledge, experiences and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- using a variety of teaching strategies that are based on children's learning needs;
- informally assessing children during teaching and acting immediately where necessary;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children, and to help them to 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 above the age-related expectations;
- monitoring children's progress, and providing support/intervention (such as speech therapy), as necessary.

## **The Foundation Stage curriculum**

In Reception we follow a personalised curriculum using the 2021 statutory framework of the EYFS, Development Matters 2021 and Birth to 5 Matters.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. Without a strong mastery of the Prime Areas, children will not have the ability to fully access the Specific Areas.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

The school makes full use of the outdoor learning environment, where a planned programme of appropriate activities takes place at all times of year. Children wear suitable clothing at all times.

## **Assessment**

The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations during the Foundation Stage, and to summarise their pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals. It covers each area of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage.

During the first half term in the reception class, the teacher assesses the ability of each child, using the Foundation Stage Profile and statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) to form their individual baseline. The RBA is completed within the first six weeks of a child being on roll and assesses children in their language, communication, literacy and maths. These assessments 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 make regular assessments of children's learning, utilising guidance from Development Matters. We use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.

Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of teachers' judgements and observations of both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate. The collection of assessment data in the Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory requirement. We collate this information in an individual 'Learning Journey' using the online platform 'Evidence Me'. Children, parents and carers have opportunities to view and contribute observations and comments to the learning journey via 'Evidence Me' also. A wide range of evidence is gathered and is shared with parents and carers.

The teacher makes ongoing assessments which contribute towards the updating of the Foundation Stage Profile, using Target Tracker. At the end of the final term in Reception, we make a summary of these assessments and identify if children have met the Early Learning Goals. This information is shared with the Year 1 teacher at transition meetings so the child's next teacher can make plans for the year ahead. We share this information too at parental consultation meetings which take place each term.

Parents and carers receive an annual report that offers brief comments on each child's progress. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs, and gives details of the child's general progress. These are sent to parents and carers in early July each year.

## **The role of parents and carers**

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

- talking to parents or carers about their child before their child starts in our school;
- optional visits by the teacher and teaching assistant to children in their home setting prior to their starting school;
- stay and play sessions before their children start school;
- inviting all parents and carers to an induction meeting during their child's first term;
- offering parents and carers regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in their reception class;
- encouraging parents and carers to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns;
- having flexible admission arrangements, and allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances;
- arranging for children to start school, on a staggered basis over the first half of the Autumn term, so that the teacher can welcome each child individually into our school;
- offering a range of activities, throughout the year, that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents/carers;
- inviting parents into the classroom on Tuesdays for the first twenty minutes of the day to engage in an activity with their child;
- providing various activities that involve parents and carers, i.e. regular communication with home through inviting parents and carers to curriculum workshops, in order to discuss the kind of work that the children are undertaking;
- inviting parents to work with their child in our termly 'family curriculum workshop'.
- providing opportunities for the parents/carers to record the learning that occurs outside of school using 'Evidence Me'.

#### **Monitoring and review**

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

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_