



**Foundation Stage
Policy
September 2015**

Kippax Ash Tree Policy for Foundation Stage

Introduction

This policy was developed as a result of discussion and consultation across the Foundation Stage in relation to the Foundation Stage vision, aims and practices. It should be read in conjunction with the following other school policies:

Learning and Teaching
Equal opportunities
Behaviour
Anti Bullying
Marking and Feedback
Safeguarding Policy
Statutory Welfare Requirements
Admissions Policy

Aims of this Policy:

- To summarise the vision of the Foundation Stage.
- To outline our aims and practise in relation to the above.
- To provide guidance for teaching, planning, assessment, the learning environment and resources,
- To outline the roles and responsibilities of staff.

Inclusion Statement

‘High standards are expected of all children. This will be done by delivering a comprehensive scheme of work which provides continuity and progression for all. Teaching and learning should be planned so that all lessons are inclusive and all children are enabled to participate fully and effectively.’ *(Taken from National Curriculum p30-37).*

Reference should also be made to the following policies: Equal opportunities, Inclusion, Racial Equality and the Disability Discrimination Act.

Background Information about The Foundation Stage

The Foundation Stage covers that time from three years of age when children enter Foundation Stage 1 to the end of the academic year in which the children are five and leave Foundation Stage 2. Children may join the Foundation Stage at any time during this period. Most children in our setting will join the Foundation Stage in the term after their third birthday and transfer to Foundation Stage 2 at the start of the academic year in which they are five. However children may enter the Foundation Stage at other times.

The Foundation Stage is an important stage in its own right, as well as providing a sound foundation for future learning. It is a period of rapid growth and development, during which children discover a great deal about the world and themselves. Early experiences are critical in developing concepts, skills and attitudes, which can be positively influenced by adult relationships at home and school. Early education helps to nurture social, intellectual and physical well-being and thereby helps to equip children with the positive attitudes and habits of learning needed to embark on future education and life ahead.

Our philosophy

Our philosophy for learning in the Foundation Stage is based upon the principles of Reggio Emilia. Although we fully believe in the principles of Reggio Emilia, our approach is tailored to the needs of our children who attend Kippax Ash Tree. Learning is led by the individual child but through a more structured and focused approach using sustained thinking strategies. We believe that children should have some control over the direction of their learning, children must be able to learn through experiences of touching, moving, listening, seeing, and hearing, children have a relationship with other children and with material items in the world and that children must be allowed to explore and children must have endless ways and opportunities to express themselves.

At Kippax Ash Tree we believe children have rights and should be given opportunities to develop their potential through self-initiated exploration and themed project led learning approaches. Throughout the day children work on family group projects where they have the opportunity to explore, observe, hypothesize, question, discuss and clarify their understanding in the various zones across the unit.

Adults in the unit are seen as the facilitators. Adults challenge, extend and question children through sustained learning conversations to encourage children to make decisions, choices and lead their learning in their own desired direction.

We want all the children to take an active role in their learning; persevering with problems they encounter, have an enterprising attitude and show determination to achieve high standards in everything they do. Our approach also allows children to understand how to work as part of a team, think creatively and independently. All valuable lifelong learning skills.

Our vision

As a result of consultation with all staff across the Foundation Stage we discussed what our vision is for the children who attend our foundation and what type of children we want them to be by the end of their time in FS.

Together we aim to create: articulate, confident, resilient, independent, happy, motivated, proud, curious, well rounded and sociable individuals who are able to play and learn together collaboratively. In an ever changing world we do not know what their world will be like in thirty years' time however we do know that whatever happens, as adults they will need to be resilient, confident and be able to work together with others collaboratively. Therefore we endeavour our children to be ready for this.

In order to achieve this we all need to respect and trust the belief that children have rights and should be given opportunities to develop their potential. Children are seen as 'knowledge bearers' so are encouraged to share their thoughts and ideas about everything, especially what journey they want to take their learning on (in accordance with the Reggio Emilia approach).

Our core values

Every child is an active participant in learning.

Child need to experience adult led learning, adult directed learning and independent learning. The environment is our 'third teacher'.

Parents are an essential resource for their child's learning.

We make learning visible through using a variety of methods to track and document children's learning thoughts and ideas as they play and learn.

The adult role is to facilitate and move learning on through a variety of methods.

Aims of the Foundation Stage

Our aims for the Foundation Stage are:

- To enable each child to reach his or her full physical, emotional, social and intellectual potential.
- To provide a curriculum that supports, fosters, promotes and develops children's:
 - Personal, social and emotional well-being: routines should not be rigid but compromise a sequence of events, smooth transitions and consistency of adult expectations and support.
 - Positive attitudes and dispositions towards their learning
 - Speaking, listening and social skills.
 - Attention skills and persistence
 - Imagination
 - Problem solving skills
 - Critical thinking
 - Collaboration
 - Curiosity
 - Resilience
 - Language and communication
 - Reading and writing
 - Mathematics
 - Knowledge and understanding of the world
 - Physical development: children will develop physical skills if they have sufficient time to persist and learn from their mistakes.
 - Creative development: children will learn to respond, explore, express and communicate their ideas and use their imagination if they have the sufficient time.
 - Knowledge of the world and the use of technology: children need opportunities to gather information to satisfy their curiosity.
- To provide equal opportunities for all children regardless of ethnic or social background, gender or any special educational needs.
- To celebrate and share children's achievements.
- To ensure the early identification of children's individual needs.
- To work in partnership with parents.

Teaching and Learning Strategies

Teaching means systematically helping children to learn so that they are helped to make connections in their learning and are actively led forward as well as helped to reflect on what they have already learned.

Children learn and develop in many different ways. Practitioners teach children using a variety of methods ensuring challenging and playful opportunities across the prime and specific areas of learning and development. They also foster the characteristics of effective learning through playing and exploring, active learning, creating and thinking critically. The teacher is considered a co-learner and collaborator and not just an instructor. Teachers are encouraged to facilitate the child's learning by planning activities and lessons based on the child's interests, asking questions to further understanding, and actively engaging in the activities alongside the child, instead of sitting back and observing the child learning.

"As partner to the child, the teacher is inside the learning situation" (Hewett, 2001).

Adults use strategies (*based upon the philosophies of Reggio Emilia*) to support children's sustained shared thinking. The role of the adult in effective child led learning is to:

- Invite the child to elaborate
- Recapping learning
- offering own experiences to learning conversations
- clarifying ideas
- suggesting
- reminding
- using encouragement
- offering an alternative viewpoint
- speculating
- reciprocating
- asking open ended questions and extending learning
- modelling thinking
- listening to children
- being attentive
- making contributions
- use a range of strategies which suit the conversational; purpose and needs of the child
- show a desire to get to know the child better
- be respectful and responsive to children's ideas and opinions
- be innovative and creative in responses to children ideas.

The strategies outlined above are used by the facilitators to deliver a curriculum through the areas of learning and development.

Areas of learning and development		
Prime areas	Communication and language	Listening and attention
		Understanding
		Speaking
	Personal, social and emotional development	Making relationships
		Self confidence and self awareness
		Managing feelings and behaviour
	Physical development	Moving and Handling
		Health and self-care
	Specific areas	Maths
Shape and space		
Literacy		Reading
		Writing
Expressive arts and design		Exploring and using media and materials
		Being imaginative
Understanding the world		People and communities
		Technology
		The World

Practitioners will also observe and comment on **The Characteristics of Effective Learning**. These are:

Playing and exploring	Active learning	Creating and thinking critically
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding out and exploring • Playing with what 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being involved and concentrating • Keeping trying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having their own ideas • Making links

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> they know • Be willing to 'have a go' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoying and achieving what they set out to do 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choosing ways to do things
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As a result of this effective teaching strategies include:

- Planning and creating a learning environment
- Organising time and material resources
- Interacting, questioning, responding to questions
- Working with and observing questions
- Assessing and recording children's progress and sharing knowledge gained with other practitioners and parents.

Therefore practitioners:

- Work with parents
- Promote children learning through planned experiences and are challenging
- Model positive behaviour
- Using language which is rich and uses the correct grammar
- Using conversation and carefully framed questions to develop children's knowledge
- Teach direct skills and knowledge
- Teach children to teach each other
- Interact and support children in a way that positively affected attitudes to learning
- Plan the indoor and outdoor environment to provide a positive context for learning
- Use assessment to evaluate the quality of provision and CPD needs.

Effective learning strategies for children include:

- Feeling safe and secure to enable them to become confident
- Initiating activities which promote learning from each other
- Learning through movement and their senses
- Having time to explore interests and ideas in depth
- Learning in different ways and at different rates
- Making links in their learning
- Being creative and using imaginative play to promote the development of language.

Planning

'There should be opportunities for children to engage in activities planned by adults and those that they plan and initiate themselves. Children need time to become engrossed, work in depth and complete activities'.

Bringing the Reggio Approach to your Early Years, pg. 57.

Long term planning currently identifies what topics / themes children will learn through across the seven areas of learning. *At the time of updating this policy discussions were being held around moving to a more project led approach therefore discarding all topics and themes. Currently the FS follow the IPC themes and topics which change half termly.

Short term

The day is planned to a routine which fits well for both adults and children taking into consideration the organisational needs of the adults and the interest of the children. During the course of the day children will play, explore and investigate, communicate with one another and adults, think and reflect, eat and drink, rest, be outdoors and be involved in long term projects. The flexible planning approach makes the most of many learning opportunities that arise from daily routines.

- There is planning in the long term for continuous areas of play provision showing continuity and progression throughout the Foundation Stage.
- Medium term for topics and themes of interest to the children are planned to ensure breadth and balance during the Foundation Stage.
- Short term planning is for focused adult directed activities.
- Enhancements to the zones will also be planned in the short term to provide opportunities for children to apply new skills and work on project based learning activities.
- Planning meetings take place every half term between all Foundation Stage staff for medium term planning. Weekly planning meetings take place between teachers to plan and evaluate in the short term and discuss individual children and their learning journeys.
- Evaluation is made at half termly planning meetings of the medium term topic planning.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Ongoing assessment is at the heart of effective early years practice.

Formative Assessment

As each child enters F1 and F2 a three week baseline process will take place where practitioners will observe each child and gather evidence for each of the seven areas of learning to form a holistic picture of each individual. This will form a child baseline assessment. From this progress can be measured half termly.

In FS we observe children as they act and interact with their play, planned activities and child initiated activities. We also learn from parents what their child does at home through day to day conversations with parents and guardians.

Gathering evidence in the forms of written observations, photographs, videos, independent work, learning conversations, direct teaching and assessment activities a picture can be built up of each individual child. This picture can then be used to identify where a child sits in their own development pathway. We use the ICT programme 2simple to record observations, these are collated and printed for each child's learning profile.

Planning is the tool which can be used to strengthen and deepen current learning and development. The development statements can be used to identify possible areas to challenge and extend current learning and therefore move a child forwards in their development. However it is the adult's response and interaction to children's 'play' that ultimately plays the biggest part in moving the learning forward.

Foundation Stage 1

- Discussions with parents and carers at one to one meetings prior to the child joining Foundation Stage 1.
- Entry level assessment of progress in each of the prime and specific areas of learning completed within the first three weeks of entering the setting and entered onto SIMS.
- Second summary judgement against the development months made at the end of the Autumn term and entered onto SIMS.
- Third summary judgement against the development months made at the end of the Spring term and entered onto SIMS.
- Final summary judgements made using the development months during final half term in Foundation Stage 1 and entered onto SIMS.
- At each of these summary points an analysis will be completed by class teachers to determine those children which are 'on track' to achieve their ARE and plan any strategies that need to be implemented to support and challenge all learners.
- Regular system of observations across all areas of learning during the child's time in Foundation Stage 1, collated in an assessment profile organised under the seven areas of learning. Dated and annotated examples of significant work may be kept, including photos. Observations are referenced to the Development Matters month bandings and

provide evidence towards beginning, developing or mastering a development month band.

- A summative report is completed and shared with parents when transferring within the Foundation Stage.

Foundation Stage 2

- Discussions with parents and carers at one to one meetings prior to the child joining Foundation Stage 2.
- Entry level assessment in each of the prime and specific areas of learning completed within the first three weeks of entering the setting for those children joining the school in Foundation Stage 2. End of Foundation Stage 1 data will be used as entry data for those children transferring within the setting.
- Second summary judgement against the development months made at the end of the Autumn term and entered on to SIMS.
- Third summary judgement against the development months made at the end of the Spring term and entered on to SIMS.
- Final summary judgements made using the development months during final half term in Foundation Stage 2 and entered onto SIMS. This data is sent to the LA for analysis and used to inform curriculum planning for the following year.
- At each of these summary points an analysis will be completed by class teachers to determine those children which are on track and plan any strategies that need to be implemented to support and challenge all learners.
- Regular system of observations across all areas of learning during the child's time in Reception, collated in an assessment profile organised under the seven areas of learning. Dated and annotated examples of significant work may be kept, including photos. Observations are referenced to the stepping stones they provide evidence towards.
- Individual holistic observations are also completed to gain further evidence of children's learning.
- A Summative report completed and shared with parents at the end of Foundation Stage. Children's individual profiles sent home to parents.
- All records collated and transferred to Key stage 1.

Resources and the learning environment

- The learning environment acts as the third teacher with the belief that children can best create meaning and make sense of their world through environments which support "complex, varied, sustained, and changing relationships between people, the world of experience, ideas and the many ways of expressing ideas.
- A range of open ended resources are available to meet the developmental needs of children and reflect the rich and diverse nature of the community and society that we live in.
- All resources are available for all children regardless of ethnic or social background, gender or ability. Adaptations have been made for wheelchair access.
- Consumables are ordered throughout the year by the FS leader.
- Equipment and resources are where possible stored on open shelving in clearly labelled containers. Resources are regularly checked and cleaned.

Outdoor provision

Children have the opportunity to go outdoors in all weather. We provide spare wellies and waterproof all in ones for children to wear in adverse weather conditions. Children have the freedom to move from inside and outside freely for most of the session time. We encourage children to explore and learn outdoors throughout the seasons however there are occasions where it is too dangerous for the children to go outside and the outdoor area is out of bounds.

Safety

Safeguarding is paramount. All staff are CRB checked. All staff adhere to the schools Safeguarding Policy and the Welfare Requirements for FS. Children are taught how to handle and use tools and equipment with appropriate care and according to the rules and guidelines laid down. Staff, students, volunteers and parents are made aware of the need for the physical safety of the children (e.g. closing gates, safety on large equipment, health and safety guidelines). Equipment is checked on a daily basis for potential hazards. However it is recognised that children need opportunities to learn from situations that present a challenge and to develop the skills to make their own risk assessment. Therefore we do not provide a totally risk free environment.

Staff are not permitted to use their mobile phone within the setting when children are present. When adults are working with children all mobile phones must be in closed, preferably locked cupboards. Staff can make personal calls at lunch time or this can be arranged in a closed room in special / emergency circumstances. Staff must not use the school landline to make personal calls, unless it is a special circumstance which has been agreed with SLT. Staff must not take photos or videos of children on their phones and must only use the schools camera's and tablets to do this as an assessment record keeping strategy.

Parents are encouraged not to use their mobile phones in the setting. Parents must not take photos of other children except their own in the setting. Any concerns should be communicated with the FS leaders.

*Please refer to the schools Health and Safety and Safeguarding policy for further guidance.

Roles and Responsibilities

All practitioners share responsibility for:

- Teaching
- Planning
- Assessing – as their key worker all practitioners have responsibility for compiling a group of children's profiles and writing ending of year reports.
- Maintaining and developing provision
- Preparing and developing resources
- Working with parents – including parent's consultation
- Implementing the strategies outlined in this policy
- Being motivated and committed to their own CPD needs and that of others.

Foundation Stage Leader

- To lead FS and ensure all staff are 'on board' with a shared vision.
- To lead and support the foundation team in implementing policies and practices
- To plan for the strategic development of the Foundation Stage
- To ensure that parents are involved and informed about their child's education.
- To formulate policy and curriculum documentation in consultation with team
- To monitor planning, the learning environment, assessment, reporting and transition to ensure continuity and progression
- Lead meetings and ensure records are kept
- Keep an up to date co-ordinators file
- To order equipment and resources
- To monitor and evaluate the impact on progress
- To monitor and evaluate quality of provision.
- To collate and analyse assessment data and feed back to SLT.
- To communicate to SLT when training needs / CPD needs arise.

For further details of roles and responsibilities please see individual job descriptions.

Policy Agreed Date:

Review Date: Every 2 years.