



Parkwood Primary School

Foundation Stage Policy

September 2022

Next Review: September 2024

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life to support their full potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance.”

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon four themes:

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

At Parkwood we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self- assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school. All children at Parkwood Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school. In our school we believe that all our children matter. 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 planning for their learning. In Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Welfare

It is important to us that all children in the school are ‘safe’. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. “Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.”

At Parkwood Primary School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage.

At Parkwood Primary School we:

- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Promote good oral health and the importance of teeth brushing.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose.
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.

Positive Relationships

At Parkwood Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through:

- Arranging welcome meetings to introduce the school and all members of the Foundation Stage Team.
- Offering both parents and children the opportunity to spend time in the Foundation Stage before starting school.
- Operating an open-door policy for parents with any queries.
- Sharing regularly the children's 'Learning Journey' with parents and valuing the ongoing contributions to this from parents. Observations are made through "Tapestry".
- Offering two formal parent/teacher consultation days per year.
- Sending a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in the Foundation stage.
- Developing a range of challenges (Via Tapestry) throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents.
- Inviting parents to reading workshops and reading in class sessions.
- Organising stay, play and craft sessions.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. Enabling Environment Observation, Assessment and Planning Foundation Stage staff use observations as the basis for planning.

Staff are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then lead the direction of the planning. The staff use key themes, key events and the children's interests to draw up medium term plans. In addition to this the children lead the short-term activity sometimes leading to planning on a day to day basis. This fostering of the children's interests develops a high level of motivation for the children's

learning. Our objectives within Foundation Stage are from the Development Matters Statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage document.

The Learning Environment

Each child has their own “base class”, with an allocated teacher and teaching assistant, yet they will have the opportunity to work with all adults throughout their day. As a result, it is not only the class teacher and teaching assistant who knows each child very well – it is the whole Foundation Stage team.

Our learning environments allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet, creative etc. Foundation Stage has two outdoor areas that that the children can free flow between. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. The children can explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant.

We have a daily phonics and maths session. Phonics is taught following the “Read, Write Inc” programme. Handwriting and writing are taught daily within our phonics sessions but other opportunities to read, write and use mathematical knowledge are evident throughout the day, through adult focused activities and within the environment where children can independently apply what they have been taught.

Balance of adult-directed and child-initiated learning

In order to provide high-quality experiences for young children we aim for a balance of adult directed activities and child-initiated activities. Through adult-led activities we introduce children to new ideas, provide opportunities for them to develop their skills and ensure that they experience all areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). We balance the adult-led learning with time and opportunity for the children to explore their own ideas, play with resources and use their imagination and creativity. It is only through doing this and practising the skills that they have learned, that children will be able to take **ownership of their learning and be able to apply it in different situations.**

Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in early year’s settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

Prime Areas:

- Communication and Language
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Specific Areas:

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

We deliver learning for all of the areas through, purposeful play and learning experiences, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

Within learning and development, we focus on the characteristics of effective learning;

- playing and exploring
- active learning
- creating and thinking critically

In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development. Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. Children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements. Clarifying ideas and asking open ended questions. Children can access resources and move around the classroom freely and purposefully to extend their learning.

Importance of Play

The EYFS profile advocates that there should be a balance of adult-directed and child-initiated activities and stresses that well-planned play is a key way in which children learn. It enables children to learn independence, social skills, self-discipline and positive self-esteem. Zones have been created across two classrooms to provide opportunities for the children to work on their next steps through play, such as:

- Role play areas e.g. shop, home corner
- Small world play
- Construction corner
- Library area
- Art/creative areas for activities on a large and small scale, individually and in groups
- Large outdoor play e.g. large construction kits, obstacle courses, role play on the stage, use of the wider school grounds
- Small outdoor play e.g. chalk, sand and water, puppet theatre, mud kitchen

Admissions Policy

Pupils are admitted to school in accordance with Medway local authority admissions policy. Prior to admission, tours of the school are offered to enable parents to make an informed choice.

Starting School and Settling In

The school has links with the main feeder pre-school groups to promote a smooth transition to the school. Prior to starting school, staff from Foundation Stage contact Keyworkers in their pre-school setting and make visits where possible before inviting the children to come and experience the Foundation Stage classrooms with their Teacher. Transition conversations are made with each child's key person to discuss the individual needs of the children.

During the first full week, the children attend a morning or an afternoon session. This is to ensure their emotional needs are met, giving them the opportunity to learn their new environment in smaller cohort groups, the teaching staff and all of the new routines. After the first full week, all children attend the morning session as well as lunch time as a whole class, before attending full days. During these initial weeks, updates with parents will be made either verbally or via Tapestry.

Assessment

The Foundation Stage profile is an ongoing assessment of achievement in the Foundation year. It refers specifically to progress measured against the Early Learning Goals and will be reported to parents in the summer term and passed on to the next teacher.

Teachers carry out a compulsory on-entry baseline assessment for every child during their first few weeks at school alongside initial observations. This provides a starting point against which to measure achievement.

Staff plan observations of the children on a regular basis which inform future planning, and formative and summative assessments are made throughout the year. Teachers use their observations to judge whether a child has mastered a skill with independence.

All Information gathered from the profiles on both individual children and the cohort are used to inform planning in Key Stage 1 and are reported to the LEA.

Equal Opportunities

At Park Wood we believe it is the right of all children to have access to a broad and balanced curriculum regardless of gender, race, class or special educational need or disability.

Health and Safety

The school's guidelines on health and safety issues are followed.

Children will only be dismissed to a parent or carer at the end of the day unless staff have been notified of any change. There is a password for every child, should somebody else need to pick a child up.