

Foundation Stage Policy

Rationale

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage,
Department for Education, (April, 2017)

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. It is essential that the practitioners working in Reception build up on that prior learning and experience. This is done through ensuring that parents/carers, support staff and the early years practitioners work together effectively to support children’s learning and development. This is achieved by the sharing of information from previous settings and parents/carers and ensuring that each child’s learning is a continuous journey.

The term Foundation Stage is used to describe children in Snowdrops pre-School and children in the Reception classes only.

Aims

It is every child’s right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being. At Sheffield Girls’ these 5 entitlements are underpinned by the EYFS principles:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured,
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships,
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers,
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

At Sheffield Girls’ we aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential.

We aim to:

- Develop a carefully structured curriculum delivered by teachers who understand and are able to implement the EYFS requirements that will set in place firm foundations for future learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond
- Build on the early experiences of each child – valuing what children already know and can do
- Work with parents/carers in an atmosphere of mutual respect.
- Plan opportunities for children to engage in activities planned by adults and those that they plan or initiate themselves, enabling choice and decision-making, fostering independence and self-confidence

- Plan purposeful activities for children to have rich and stimulating experiences, in a learning environment that is well organised and motivating
- Ensure that effective learning and development takes place by observing and responding appropriately to children informed by knowledge of how children develop and learn
- Recognise that each child is different and ensure that no child is excluded or disadvantaged
- Ensure that all experiences during the Reception year are underpinned by PSED where each child learns how to work and play, co-operate and function in a group, develop personal and moral values and understand themselves and others.

Teaching & Learning

The seven early learning goals, or areas of learning, provide a framework for planning, teaching and assessing the Snowdrop and Reception curriculum at Sheffield Girls'. Our medium term planning identifies the intended learning, with outcomes.

The curriculum is planned through a series of themes and topics, each of which offer experiences in all seven areas and ICT. This gives structure and coherence to the curriculum. Topics are planned for each of the six half terms and all areas of learning and development are given equal importance, to determine broad and balanced coverage and ensure the progression of each child. Both the medium and short term planning allows for flexibility in response to individual children's needs and interests and for revision and modification, informed by on-going observational assessment.

Teachers plan together to provide continuous provision and focussed activities linking all areas of learning over each term, week and day and an outline of the work is displayed for parents.

Staff ensure that all children are encouraged to experience all areas of activity during the week, although they may not experience them each day.

As they approach transfer to Key Stage 1, they are prepared for a more formal approach and different learning styles.

Training needs of all adults working within the Foundation Stage are identified through the school review system – (PDP).

The curriculum

The early learning goals (the knowledge, skills and understanding which young children should acquire by the end of the Reception year) and the educational programmes are set out in the "Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage" document (April 2017).

The three prime areas of learning and development are:

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

The four specific areas of learning and development are:

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

At Sheffield girls' we believe these areas are equally important and interconnected, depending on each other to support a rounded approach to child development. We deliver all the areas through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child initiated activities. We aim to challenge the more able children to achieve 'exceeding' level of attainment at the end of Reception.

Differentiation and Special Needs

Currently the person with responsibility for SEND in the EYFS is Michelle Bates. Work is planned according to the needs and abilities of the pupils, challenging individual children to achieve their full potential. All children are given the same opportunities; however activities will be differentiated by task, outcome or support.

Managing Behaviour

The Behaviour and Sanctions Policy covers the EYFS. Mrs Rachael Leslie is responsible for the implementation of the Behaviour and Sanctions Policy in the Foundation Stage. Corporal punishment is not allowed; it is not permitted to threaten physical punishment. Physical intervention is only allowed in order to prevent a child from immediate danger of injuring themselves or another child. Should physical intervention be necessary, this must be reported to the Head of Infant and Junior School as soon as practically possible; who will record the incident in writing. The child's parents should be informed that day.

Assessment, recording and reporting

Prior to entry into Snowdrops, children attend settling in sessions and an informal chat about the child is encouraged between the Pre-school teacher and parent.

Prior to entry into Reception transition documents are forwarded from the child's previous setting. On entry to Reception PIPS Baseline is used and then a follow-up assessment is made at the end of the academic year. There are two parents' evenings throughout the year to discuss progress and at the end of the year a written report is given to parents.

Assessments and on-going observations, linked to the learning objectives, are made by the team and discussed when planning. Evidence of achievement and pieces of work can be found in the children's books, folders of work and on displays and in the Snowdrop children's learning Journals. On-going observations and assessments are made through 'Tapestry' (an on-line learning journal) which the parents can access and are encouraged to contribute.

In Snowdrops practitioners working directly with the children contribute observations to the learning journals and Tapestry. Pre-School children should be working within the 30-50 months developmental matters and progress is tracked for each child on an individual tracking sheet.

At the end of Reception, the EYFS Profile summarises all of the formative assessment undertaken and the class teachers make a 'best fit' judgement for each child against the 17 Early learning Goals. The Profile is updated termly on SIMs for each child and at the end of the year this generates a final outcome of 'emerging' 'expected' or 'exceeding' in each area.

At the time of transfer to Y1 there is a planned programme and class teachers discuss each child in detail and pass on FSP's and PIPS data.

Transition into Snowdrops

Parents are welcome to come and visit snowdrops at any time. Once a place has been offered, children are encouraged to attend a number of settling in sessions in the term prior to them starting to ease the transition. Staff are happy to discuss the children's need on an individual basis with parents.

Liaison with pre-school settings and induction for Reception

During the year before starting school, there are many opportunities for pre-school girls to join in with 'Stay and Play' sessions. The girls can enjoy craft activities in the classroom whilst their parents have coffee. During the summer term, the children who will be starting school in September, make visits to the Reception classes in small groups to play and stay for introductory sessions.

At Sheffield Girls' we have developed close links between several nurseries and settings. The Reception teachers make contact with preschool providers and will visit prospective children in their settings. Prospective parents can visit the school at any time and the school holds Open Mornings throughout the year prior to a new academic year.

Reception to Year 1 Transition

Reception and Year 1 teachers work together to make the transition from the EYFS to Key Stage 1 as smooth as possible.

Children are encouraged to develop independence when dressing and undressing and when organising their personal belongings throughout the Reception year. Reception practitioners plan for some more structured activities to be undertaken during the Summer Term, encouraging less dependence on adult support.

Where possible, the Year 1 children continue to enjoy practical learning experiences which gradually become more formalised. Reception children meet Year 1 teachers during whole school activities during the Reception year and at some planned sessions in the Summer Term. An EYFS Profile end of year class summary sheet and assessment records are passed on to Year 1 teachers. Reception and Year 1 teachers meet to discuss individual needs of children in July.

Home/School and Pre-School Links

We recognise that parents/carers are the child's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. When parents/carers and practitioners work together in early years settings, the results have a positive impact on the child's development. A successful partnership needs to be a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise. We aim to develop this by:

- Outlining the Reception curriculum to parents/carers during the new parents meeting in September, and with a 'curriculum' letter sent to all Snowdrops parents, to enable them to understand the value of supporting their child's learning at home
- Organising a "Teddy Bears Picnic" as a starting school informal meeting in early September with the children, parents and the teachers.
- Regularly updating a parents notice board with half term outline, notices about forthcoming events, photographs of their children at school etc.
- Operating an "open door" policy, whereby parents/carers can come and discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner
- Inviting parents/carers to help in school and Pre-School and to accompany children on outdoor visits
- Holding child/parent workshops to enable parents to work alongside their children.
- Encouraging parents/carers to listen to their child read/undertake a reading/phonics activity and to comment on progress in a home/school reading record book.
- Encouraging relevant learning activities to be continued at home e.g. maths games and borrowing library books, ensuring that experiences at home are used to develop learning in school and sharing story sacks (in Pte-School)

- Sharing progress at school through annotated photographs/examples of work and encouraging parents to comment on/add to their child's on-line learning journey
- Discussing individual targets with parents/carers at Parents' Evenings in October and February (informed by the EYFS Profile)
- Providing an annual written report to parents/guardians in July summarising the child's progress against the Early Learning Goals and EYFS assessment scales in Reception and providing a transition summary report for Snowdrop children who leave in the Summer term before school entry.

Equal Opportunities

At Sheffield Girls' we aim to provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life and work to ensure that every child is valued fully as an individual. Other cultures are celebrated through aspects of the EYFS curriculum.

Practitioners, as role models, are aware of the influence of adults in promoting positive attitudes. Inappropriate attitudes and behaviour will be challenged sensitively by staff and the school's values reinforced positively.

For children with specific difficulties, either permanent or temporary, the SEND-co will liaise with other staff, including the School Nurse if appropriate, to ensure that wherever possible the needs of the individual are met.

EAL

Please refer to the SEND policy. In addition, in the EYFS children will be allowed to use their home language, should they wish, in play and learning situations, whilst still encouraging their development of English. For example if an older pupil speaks a child's home language, arrangements may be made for them to have time in school to talk. If required, additional support to develop fluency in English will be provided and this will be arranged by the SEND-co. Assessments for children with a home language other than English, will be made in English (e.g. Pips), in order to identify specific need. If there are concerns about a child's language development, then this will be discussed with parents.

Inclusion

It is important that all children are safe. We aim to protect the physical and psychological wellbeing of all children. (see Safeguarding Policy).

We endeavour to challenge inappropriate attitudes and practices through positive modelling and reinforcement by staff. Any such behaviour is dealt with immediately. Staff will speak to the individual and if necessary all children. Attitudes and practices will be monitored. Staff will refer to the Behaviour Policy, Teacher in Charge of Early Years and ultimately Head of Juniors for guidance as necessary. Children with special educational needs will be given support as appropriate to enable them to benefit from the curriculum. This includes children that are more able, and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities.

Learning Support plans identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support, in line with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy. The SEND co-ordinator (Mrs Bates) is responsible for providing additional information and advice to practitioners and parents, and for arranging external intervention and support where necessary. These needs will be regularly reviewed and provision amended by FS staff and the SEND-co. For further information see SEND Policy.

Responsibility: R.Leslie	Updated: 16 October 2017	Review: September 2018
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