



## Foundation Stage Policy

|                             |                                  |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Date of review: Autumn 2014 | Date of next review: Autumn 2017 |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|

### **The reasons for this policy are:-**

- To establish an entitlement for all children within the Foundation Stage.
- To promote the importance of the Foundation Stage, as the beginning of each child's school life.
- To state the school's approach to the Foundation Stage Curriculum, in order to promote parents' and carers' understanding.
- To establish expectations for all staff working with children in the Foundation Stage and for other staff in school.
- To ensure smooth transition from the Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1.

### **The policy was developed by:-**

The Foundation Stage Team, in consultation with parents, children and the school community.

### **This policy links with the school aims and learning values:-**

- There is a positive learning culture
- Children are active partners in their own learning
- Children develop as resilient individuals
- We develop learning skills which will prepare us for our futures

We aim to do this by promoting learning through play, with first-hand experience, using both the indoor and outdoor environment.

### **General Statement**

The Foundation Stage covers the development of children from the age of three to the end of the reception year. It recognises that early childhood is an important stage of life and has its own particular needs. The Foundation Stage acknowledges the many valuable skills children have developed and the importance of the role that parents play in this. Children learn best from first-hand experience and learning is inter-related to help children to achieve their full potential.

The Foundation Stage Policy should be read in conjunction with all other policy documents in the school.

Key Stage 1 starts at the beginning of Year One.

## **Aims**

The Foundation Stage sets out to support each child's welfare, learning and developmental needs by:

- recognising that all children are unique and special
- challenging children and set high expectations for learning
- presenting the children with a structured programme of activities which is responsive to the needs of individuals, fostering learning across the seven areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS 2014)
- providing a secure, stimulating and challenging learning environment which encourages children to work and play independently
- developing each child's knowledge, skills and enjoyment in all areas of experience, building on prior learning
- planning activities and experiences in response to the assessment of individual children's progress
- establishing good partnerships with parents and carers, where they feel valued and able to contribute to and participate in, school life
- ensuring that children with special needs are identified early and appropriate arrangements are made for them

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Foundation Stage Leader**

- monitor the quality and the appropriateness of provision
- communicate with the Senior Management Team
- ensure that early years' considerations are addressed in school policies
- ensure resources are appropriately allocated and hold responsibility for the Foundation Stage budget
- ensure all staff are aware of the Foundation Stage policy and induction procedures
- attend relevant courses for early years
- identify staff training needs
- monitor planning and practise within the Foundation team
- to manage issues arising in Foundation including the admissions procedure

- to plan and provide an appropriate curriculum for all children in Foundation with consideration to equal opportunities
- to liaise with Early Years staff
- oversee assessment and moderation to ensure consistency and quality

#### **Foundation Stage teachers**

- plan and provide an appropriate curriculum
- work with the SENCO in the early identification of children with special needs
- complete records and reports for each child
- establish and maintain a positive relationship with parents and carers
- communicate with parents on children's progress through regular discussion, including parents' evenings
- monitor and record progress of children with special educational and welfare needs and document appropriately

#### **Foundation Stage Support Staff.**

- work in close co-operation with and under the supervision of teachers to provide and maintain an environment where all children are secure and learning may take place.
- have full involvement in, and initiate where appropriate, a range of activities and play situations
- engage in planning, observations and assessment.
- liaise with other staff and professionals for children with special needs

#### **Head Teacher and Deputy Head teacher**

- ensure that Early Years priorities are included in the School Development Plan
- disseminate appropriate Local Authority and National documentation to the Foundation Stage Leader.
- overall supervision of the admission procedures
- liaise with Head teacher and governors to ensure sufficient funding is available to support the maintenance and development of resources.

#### **Admin/Clerical staff**

- liaise with the Foundation Stage Leader and Foundation staff regarding admissions
- maintain Foundation Stage waiting lists
- Administer any financial arrangements relating to paid Foundation 1 places

### **Admission Procedures**

Admission to Furzeham Primary School strictly adheres to Torbay Local Authority policy and to our own admissions policy where additional paid places are requested

Foundation 1 admits children between the age of 3 and 4. (see admissions policy)

We aim to offer a flexible accommodation of 15 hours entitlement which best meets the needs of our children and families. In addition, to the 15 hours, paid sessions can be offered, providing there is sufficient capacity (including whole days and lunchtime sessions). See nursery admissions policy

### **Induction to the Foundation Stage.**

We have compiled a comprehensive induction programme for those starting in Foundation 1. From experience, we believe that if induction procedures are followed appropriately, with care and professionalism, children and parents will have a successful and enjoyable start to school life.

#### *Home Visits and Parent Interviews.*

We believe that it is important to forge a partnership between home and school right from the start. Providing they are happy to do this, children and their families are visited in their own homes prior to starting their Foundation Stage Education. We feel that this practise helps us to develop home-school links in the following ways: it opens lines of communication between home and school

- it gives time to parents who may find it difficult to come into school
- it allows parents to discuss concerns or anxieties in private, including specific health or dietary needs
- it allows staff to meet children in the security of their own home environment and begin to establish relationships
- it allows staff to observe children behaving in a relaxed atmosphere
- it explains about the assessment and record keeping system and learning diaries and the “key worker” approach

The home visits take place prior to admission. Families are asked to complete a form detailing information relating to, for example: previous learning experiences; skills and achievements; social, emotional and health matters and parents skills and interests.

### **Continuity of Experience and Induction to Foundation 2 class.**

**We work as a Foundation Stage Unit, so this offers a smooth transition for all children who have attended Foundation 1**

All children offered a place in Foundation 2 spend more time in the class during the Summer Term where they build up a closer relationship with the Foundation Stage 2 staff, the room and each other. Children not attending Foundation 1 are also invited in at this time.

Resources are shared between the Foundation 1 and Foundation 2 classes so that the children are familiar with their usage and can build on previous experiences. This practise is important because children are at different stages of development and maturity.

The Foundation 1 and Foundation 2 children are taught the same letter formation when writing their names and a copy of the writing script is given to parents during the induction period.

The Learning diaries which have been completed throughout their time in Foundation 1 are discussed with the receiving teacher along with any other information pertinent to the child.

### **Induction to the Foundation 2 classes.**

We offer a flexible approach to the induction into the Foundation 2 class. This is intended to settle them in to their new environment and introduces new friends. Such an introduction also gives staff a chance to get to know the children quickly and will give time to assess their abilities and needs which will form the basis of a carefully planned programme of work.

Those children that need it, experience a gradual build up to full time education. The time spent in class will extend over time as the child's needs dictate. Some children are encouraged to stay at school and go home after lunch which helps them get used to lunch time routines.

As Furzeham School is funded for full time placements in Foundation two, it is not possible to allow children to attend on a part time basis for extended periods after the

induction period. However, some provision could be made for individuals to attend mornings only for a limited period of time if it is felt necessary for the child.

### **Four Year Olds in the Foundation 2 Classes.**

It is Torbay policy to admit children into school at the beginning of the academic year in which they are five years of age. The school recognises that many of these children are barely four years old when they make the transfer to a Foundation 2 class.

The needs of a four year old often differ from those who are five and therefore, classes have a wide developmental range. The staff plan an environment and differentiated learning experiences to meet the needs of all children.

### **Parent/Carers as partners**

Parents have a central role in supporting their child's learning. Staff should demonstrate a commitment to developing a positive partnership with parents and carers with a shared sense of purpose, mutual respect and a willingness to co-operate.

We aim to do this through:

- operating a "key worker" system so parents have an individual member of the team ,who they can approach about their child's development
- encouraging parents/carers to contribute to their child's learning diary
- inviting parents/carers to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school
- giving children the opportunity to spend time with the Foundation staff before starting school
- encouraging parents/carers to talk to Foundation staff if there are any concerns
- offering a range of activities which support the involvement of parents/carers, such as, the home-school book and curriculum evenings, termly open day's as well as parents' evenings where targets are shared.
- offering a morning welcome time, so that parents/carers can talk to a member of the Foundation team if needed

### **Home-school Link books in the Foundation 2 class.**

All children take home a Home/School communications book in which teachers, parents/carers and children can share information concerned with all aspects of the child's development. This is sent home every day with a book for the child to read and may include homework activities for parent/carer and child to do together. Letters informing parent/carers of school and class events will be sent home on a regular basis.

### **Parents and Carers in Class.**

We actively encourage and welcome parental involvement in a range of classroom activities. In order to gain the most from this support, we aim to give helpers clear instructions and desired learning outcomes where appropriate. All parents and carers are required to read and sign the guidelines for helpers in class. Parents who regularly help in class require a Disclosure and Barring and Safeguarding (DBS) background check.

### **Teaching and Learning**

Foundation Stage staff provide children with the social and emotional support they need during their first years at school. They help children adjust to the new social context in which they find themselves and to a range of new challenges fostering confidence in learning. Staff aim to create successful and stimulating learning situations for individuals and groups. Children will often work collaboratively with their peers and with adults who are able to extend their natural curiosity through questioning and suggestion. Every opportunity is taken to support children's learning through meaningful contexts especially play.

### **The Learning Environment.**

We aim to create a welcoming, well-organised learning environment which provides children with opportunities for discovery across the curriculum. Resources are located in designated areas and are easily accessed by the children. Pupils are encouraged to handle equipment carefully and to help with tidying up. We aim to encourage independence and develop a sense of responsibility in the children.

Areas are designated within the classrooms and outdoors. These include the following:

- a writing area containing various writing implements and papers as well as envelopes and dictionaries
- a book area containing a range of fiction, non-fiction, poetry and class-made books
- a maths resource area which allows children to select appropriate items to help them solve practical problems
- a creative area containing resources for a range of art, design and technology activities

- a construction area containing resources for developing fine motor skills, social interaction and problem solving
- a small world area which allows children to extend fine motor skills, engage in imaginative play and develop language
- a tactile/sensory area including sand and water play, where children can engage in practical investigations
- a role play area which can be developed along themed line to cover several aspects of learning in “real life” scenarios

### **The Foundation Stage Curriculum**

During their time in Foundation Stage the children follow the non-statutory “Early Years outcomes” statements following onto the “The Statutory Framework for The Early Years Foundation Stage” (March 2014) of the E YFS curriculum which serve as a foundation for future learning. It is an important, distinct stage which aims to support and develop:

- personal, social and emotional well-being
- social skills
- positive attitudes towards learning
- attention skills

These are achieved through the seven areas of learning which are:

*The Three prime areas:*

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

*Four specific areas:*

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

In the Foundation Stage we follow the four guiding principles to promote

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling environments
- Learning and development

As the Foundation Stage covers learning in both Foundation 1 and Foundation 2, it is important that continuity is maintained but that a child's experiences and learning are developed. Foundation staff aim to provide a curriculum which recognises the wide range of abilities within each year and select experiences to develop all children's abilities. During their time in Foundation 2 the children will be introduced to elements of both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies as appropriate. However, it is recognised that some children may not be ready for the more formal experiences and suitable activities for their development are planned.

### **The importance of play in the Foundation Stage.**

Play is a very important feature of children's early learning. Through play children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, develop social skills and begin to understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. The children communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. Play allows the children to explore feelings and fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

### **Planning**

Successful planning involves clear perceptions about the objectives of the curriculum and how different expedencies can contribute towards their achievement. Curriculum planning should be related to:

- the child's stage of development
- individual needs
- the stages for development for the Foundation Stage
- assessment and progression

Planning involves all members of the Foundation Team reflecting on the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning to ensure a continuity of expectation and understanding of the individual stages of a child's learning.

- Playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and "have a go";
- Active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements ; and
- Creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Planning is seen as a continuous process. Learning intentions are identified and supporting experiences and activities are planned. Adults observe children's responses

to these activities and use this knowledge to promote and extend learning. There is a continuous cycle involving planning, observing and assessing.

### **Planning process**

Planning takes into account all of the seven areas of learning with the intention of providing balance breadth and progression and a coverage sheet is completed to ensure this happens.

Planning will be informed by on- going assessment through observation and will be adapted and delivered according to the needs of individual and groups of children. Our intention is to plan for a range of experiences to be offered in the indoor teaching areas and outdoor environment, which have the potential to enable children to achieve their individual learning needs.

Short term planning takes place weekly. Daily plans are evaluated and adapted as necessary. Clear learning intentions will be evident, supporting activities and daily organisation. It identifies in more detail differentiation and assessment and opportunities for observation. This then feeds back into future planning needs.

### **Observation and Assessment**

Assessment and record keeping, informed by careful observations, enables staff to plan a curriculum that will meet the needs of individuals and ensure effective continuity and progression. Observations and assessments are built into the planning process.

The observation and assessment of children's learning helps to:

- inform planning
- ensure obstacles to learning are identified and responded to
- provide an all-round picture of the child's development
- provide information which can be used to evaluate the quality of curriculum provision

Evidence of children's progress and achievement is collected through:

- observations, both formal and of a targeted child
- questioning and interaction
- samples of work , including photographs
- talking to parent/carers and colleagues

In the final term of the school year, the Foundation 2 children are assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals. The Foundation Stage staff indicate whether the children are meeting expected levels, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels. This is the EYFS profile.

All members of the Foundation team are be involved in the observation process.

### **Record Keeping**

Record keeping starts at the initial visit or first meeting and takes account of previous experiences and the development of the whole child. Recording and reporting of children's performance is undertaken and available to all involved. Confidentiality of all records is respected and an electronic Tracking Tool (Foundation Stage Target Tracker) is used to record assessment information. It provides data which enables us to track progress and plan Individualised interventions. It is used to inform parents of children in Foundation two of their child's rate of progress over the Foundation Stage period.

### **Liaison with parents and carers**

Throughout the unit, communication between parents/carers and staff takes place daily including an open door session on a Friday morning. Parents are invited to make appointments to see staff should the need arise. Children's progress is reported more formally at open sessions twice a year and a written report is given at the end of the school year. Consultation sessions provide an opportunity to discuss children's work, share information concerning all aspects of the child's development and progress and to set new targets for the child advising on the best way parents can help.

### **Equal opportunities/diversity**

We are aware of the importance of ensuring that all children receive equality of opportunity at Furzesham School and we:-

- challenge sexism and racism
- avoid the use of stereotypes in books and resources
- choose resources which promote positive role models
- encourage children of both sexes to access all of the experiences on offer
- encourage all children to share ideas during discussions
- encourage respect for all members of the school community and the wider world and celebrate our similarities and differences
- teach children about a variety of cultures, faiths and festivals and encourage children to share their own experiences with adults and peers
- provide resources which reflect our multi-cultural and multi-faith society
- embrace children with English as an Additional Language (EAL)

We value the children's home language and try to ensure that parents have access to information. The needs of the children are considered during planning and appropriate strategies developed to facilitate progress in English. The EAL support service is called upon to advise on admission.

## **Special Educational Needs**

The early identification of children with special educational needs is important and procedures listed in the SEN code of practice 2014 are followed throughout the school. The Early Years staff liaise with parents, the SENCO, Health Visitors, Speech Therapists, school Nurse, educational Psychologist and Child and mental Health service and a range of other services in order to meet the needs of individuals. We publish a Local Offer so that parents are aware of the provision that we are able to make.

### **Monitoring of the policy**

This policy will be monitored annually by the Senior Leadership team, and the Curriculum, Standards and Monitoring committee of the Governing Body