**The Royal (Crown Aided) First School**

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**Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

***“Inspired to learn”***

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| Date reviewed: | February 2016 |
| Date ratified: | 17.05.16 |
| Date of next review: | February 2017 |
| To be reviewed by: | Education Committee |

Review frequency: Varies - please see guidance. Approval: Governing body free to determine.

Statutory guidance: Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Please also see information on the DfE website about the EYFS curriculum.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

**Introduction**

The Early Years Foundation Stage [EYFS] applies to children from three years of age to the end of the reception year. At The Royal School, the children are admitted in September. Key Stage 1 begins for our children at the beginning of Year 1. The EYFS is important in its own right, and in preparing children for later schooling. The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of the EYFS.

The majority of children joining our school have already learnt a great deal. Many have been to one of a range of settings that exist in our community. The early years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

* It builds on what our children already know and can do.
* It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged.
* It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children and activity that provides opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors.
* It provides a rich and stimulating environment.

**Aims of the EYFS**

The curriculum of the EYFS underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing childrens’:

* Personal, social and emotional well-being.
* Communication, language and literacy.
* Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy.
* Knowledge and understanding of the world.
* Physical development.
* Creative development.

**Teaching and learning style**

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 2.

The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the EYFS are:

* The partnership between teachers and parents/carers, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement.
* The understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching.
* The range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication.
* The carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the EYFS.
* 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 indoors and outdoor space, facilities and equipment.
* The identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are regularly shared with parents.
* The good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school.
* The clear aims for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do.
* The regular identification of training needs of all adults working within the EYFS.

**Play in the EYFS**

Through structured play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and 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. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

**Inclusion in the EYFS**

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 the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. Some children progress beyond this point. 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, and children from all social and cultural backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

* Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children’s knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.
* Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children’s learning needs.
* Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively.
* Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued.
* Using resources that reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.
* Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills.
* Monitoring children’s progress and taking action to provide support as necessary, this involves speech therapy for some of our children.

**The EYFS curriculum**

The curriculum for the Foundation Stage in our school reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals. The experiences that our children meet often enable them to develop a number of competencies, skills and concepts across several areas of learning.

The Early Learning Goals are in line with the objectives in the Early Years Statutory Framework 2014. By the end of the Foundation Stage year in our school, children will experience daily mathematics and literacy, including structured phonics teaching. Teachers initially address the requirements in a flexible way but, as part of the smooth transition to Key Stage 1, they put structured literacy and mathematics into operation by the end of the EYFS.

The Early Learning Goals provide the basis for planning throughout the EYFS. Teachers use the national schemes of work where appropriate to support the planning for individual children.

**Assessment**

Once the children have first entered school they are assessed using the ‘Early Excellence’ framework to provide a ‘Reception Baseline Assessment’, which will be used as an indicator of attainment on entering school.

From this entry point we make regular assessments of children’s learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher, nursery nurse and other adults as appropriate. Classroom Monitor is used to record children’s achievement against the ELGs. Evidence from observation and samples of children’s work is used to consolidate these statements.

Evidence is sourced in the child’s learning journey and their ‘Wow’ books, which are a culmination of the child’s experiences in this stage of their schooling

**The role of parents/carers**

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

* Talking to parents/carers about their child before their child starts in our school.
* The children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school.
* Offering parents/carers regular opportunities to talk about their child’s progress in EYFS and parents/carers are encouraged to talk to the child’s teacher if there are any concerns. There are termly meetings for parents/carers at which the teacher discusses the child’s progress. Families receive a report and a copy of their personal “Learning Journey” at the end of the school year.
* Having a pre-admission meeting for parents/carers and children and further introductory visits that enable children and parents/carers to become secure, and by allowing time to discuss each child’s circumstances.
* Encouraging parents/carers to stay if there are real problems with the child’s admission.
* Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents/carers.
* Offering a range of activities that support the involvement of parents/carers.

**Resources**

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