

Pre-PREPARATORY SCHOOL FOR BOYS



Foundation Stage Policy

Early Years Education at The Falcons School for Boys.

Foundation Stage Policy

This policy outlines the nature, purposes and management of the Early Years education at the Falcons School for Boys.

The term 'Early Years' is used to describe children at the Foundation Stage who are in the Nursery and Reception classes.

The **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)** is the period of the development of children from birth until the end of their first (Reception) year in school (0 to five years).

The EYFS embodies the principals of the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage(2000), Birth to Three Matters (2002) and the National Standards for the Under Eights(2003) together with those of the pioneers of early education.

As part of the Childcare Act (2006) the overarching aim of the EYFS is to help children achieve the outcomes of Every Child Matters (2003)

It is not an addition to an existing curriculum but an entity in its own right and from September 2008 the only curriculum to be used for children aged 0 – 5 years

The EYFS is bringing together best practice to create a cohesive framework.

- **It has the welfare of the child at its core describing how a child should be kept safe and cared for. Meeting the child's emotional and social needs are as important as meeting their educational needs.**
- **It establishes how practitioners should work with children and their families to support learning and development through a play-based approach.**
- **It sets out the learning and development requirements delivered through planned, purposeful play with a balance of adult- led and child-led activities**
- **It celebrates the achievements of every child as they develop through the earliest years of their life.**

- **It recognises parents as the child's first and most enduring educators and the importance of working in partnership with them to build a complete picture of the child.**

It is important that all Heads consider how best to create, maintain and improve, so that their school meets the highest standards within the EYFS and offers the best opportunities to the children in their care.

It is the responsibility of the Head of each School to ensure that the Welfare Requirements and policies of the Early Years Foundation Stage are in place by working collaboratively with The Alpha Plus Group.

The Nurseries and Schools will be expected to have written copies of all policy and procedures required. Staff must be given copies and made aware of any changes or additions.

Policies and Procedures must be accessible to all parents.

Schools are required to work with their Local Authorities to monitor assessment arrangements. Assessment takes place at the end of the Reception year against the Six Areas of Learning.

In our school children enter either the Nursery class at the age of three or the Reception class at the age of four. Key stage 1 begins at the start of Year 1 although many children will be working at this level by the summer term in Reception. The Foundation Stage 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 middle/end of the Reception year. However, most pupils are well on the way to KS1 by the end of the Summer term.

"The foundation stage of education will make a positive contribution to children's early development and learning. During this time we cannot afford to get it wrong. The early years are critical in children's development. Children develop rapidly during this time- physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially. The foundation stage is about developing key learning skills, such as listening, speaking, concentration, persistence and learning to work together and co-operate with other children. It is also about developing early communication literacy and numeracy skills that will prepare young children for key stage one of the national curriculum."

Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage, QCA/Dfe

Our Aims and Principles

We adopt the **principles** of the Foundation Stage Guidance from QCA:

- Effective education requires both a relevant curriculum and practitioners who understand and are able to implement the curriculum requirements.
- Effective education requires practitioners who understand that children develop rapidly during the early years – physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially.
- Practitioners should ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued.
- Early years experience should build on what children already know and can do
- No child should be excluded or disadvantaged.
- Parents and practitioners should work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect.
- To be effective, an early years curriculum should be carefully structured (recognising different starting points; relevant to levels of need; indoors and outdoors.)
- There should be opportunities for children to engage in activities planned by adults and those that they plan or initiate themselves Practitioners must be able to observe and respond appropriately to children informed by knowledge of how children develop and learn.
- Well planned, purposeful activity and appropriate intervention by practitioners will engage children in the learning process.
- For children to have rich and stimulating experiences, the learning environment should be well planned and well organised.
- Above all, effective learning and development for young children requires high quality care and education by practitioners.

Our main aims are

- **To facilitate the development of our children's skills, knowledge and attitudes in the six areas of development, according to their learning needs and levels of understanding.**
- **To work closely with parents as partners in their children's development and learning.**
- **To 'sow the seeds' that children will grow into independent young learners with curiosity and a desire to learn new things and 'have a go' at every stage.**
- **To promote good health, emotional wellbeing and mutual respect.**

- **To provide a happy, safe and stimulating learning environment in which the above can flourish.**

Organisation of Classes.

The boys are organised in to two groups, the Nursery and Reception classes. The Nursery has up to 26 children who attend 5 morning sessions and up to 5 optional afternoon sessions. These optional afternoons are organised in conjunction with the class teacher and the parent and usually build in number as the children approach the end of the year (in preparation for entry to the Reception class.)

There are three Reception classes, each with up to 18 children. Children in the Nursery are expected to transfer in to one of the three Reception classes and are placed in a class by the Early Years staff, taking into account the ages, abilities and friendship groups of the boys. Additional boys are received into a Reception class from other nurseries, playgroups or home settings in the area.

Staffing

The nursery has one qualified teacher and two NNEB nursery assistants. Each Reception class has a qualified teacher and EY's trained assistants who support the class teaching. Other teachers working with the Nursery and Reception include the Music and PE teachers and the French teacher, (reception class only.) Other adults working /visiting/supervising may include parent helpers, advisory staff, visitors for educational purposes e.g. in connection with current topics, lunch time supervisors, and peripatetic music or occupational/speech therapy personnel. (All visitors are requested to sign in and wear a visitor's badge). Staff in the early years also have access to the following specialists with in the school: special needs, learning support, subject specialists, and qualified First Aiders.

Resources and Equipment

The EY department is well stocked and resources are ordered through a single Early Years budget with small individual class budgets for 'incidentals' e.g. cooking ingredients. Outdoor equipment is accessible by both Nursery and Reception groups. Equipment also available to staff and children in the EY's and whole school includes music, science, P.E., cooking, library, consumable art/craft stock, 'topic' resources, software, tapes, videos, first aid equipment and posters.

Transition to Nursery/Reception .

Settling in smoothly to the Nursery or Reception *and* in to the Foundation Stage curriculum is particularly important for new children. The boys will be transferring from a variety of settings such as a playgroup, childminder, day care centre or straight from home. During this transition we place the happiness of the child as a priority. The management of change requires that we 'recognise change as a positive process_rather than an event' and that 'the children and their families need time to get to know people, to trust the staff and to feel relaxed' (Nursery Ed 28/10/04). We therefore build on what the child already knows and find out as much as we can about his experiences, accomplishments and personality. Once the children have started school, observation is the most effective underpinning to ensure that our planning and teaching is effective.

Teaching and Learning

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 Foundation Stage 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 Foundation Stage are:

- The partnership between teachers and parents, 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 and the recognition of the importance of play as a vehicle to achieve this.
- 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 the best use made of the available indoor 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 growing 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 and mutual observation to evaluate and improve what we do.

The regular identification of training needs of all adults working within the Foundation Stage.

Prior to starting school.

- All parents are encouraged to visit before placing their son's name on the waiting list.
- Parents are sent a 'Starting Nursery/Reception Questionnaire' to complete and return by the end of the summer term.
- If desired a member of staff can arrange to visit a new child in his current setting or home at the end of the summer term.
- Nursery Parents are given the 'Nursery Handbook' as well as additional material from the school office as part of a Starter Pack.
- Parents are welcomed to the school Parents Association and given information about future events etc.
- Each child is invited for a 'Welcome Day' visit in their new class and parents are invited for refreshments with the Head teacher. Staff ensure that some of the activities provided on the 'at home' visit are repeated on the child's first day to help them recognise and play with something familiar.
- Parents are encouraged to arrange play dates with other boys due to start in September.
- Boys who start during the school year are invited to spend time in their new class prior to the start date.
- Any Information /reports from previous settings are read by the receiving staff.
- Reception parents are given a 'Welcome to Reception' pack.

Transferring from the Nursery at The Falcons to Reception.

For boys already in the school transferring to Reception is usually a much easier process. The boys are familiar with the staff, classrooms, layout and workings of the whole school. However, we must still focus on each individual child's needs and recognise that to leave the nursery is an important step in a child's life. Hand- over sessions inform the Reception teachers about their new pupils and nursery assessment records e.g. The Foundation Stage Benchmarking sheets and phonic assessments are passed on.

Please see 'Nursery Curriculum Handbook' about 'the first few days' and how we help the boys settle in. The nursery class teacher (currently Head of Early Years) will support the children in Reception during the afternoon

and work with groups or individuals to improve the continuity, transition and quality of learning. Boys who have transferred from the nursery class will thus be familiar with this member of staff which will help them settle in more easily.

The role of parents.

Parents have a vital role in the education of their child. They are 'the prime educators' from the start and throughout their son's school career.

- Parents are encouraged to share their skills and interests with the children.
- In the Nursery parents are encouraged to provide information about their sons learning outside school and therefore contribute to their overall Profile e.g. in the Nursery, parents record their son's learning on sheets of sticky labels and bring these in regularly to be pasted into their son's Evidence Folder.
- Parents are encouraged to read with their child each day and support his learning by stimulating his interest eg in relation to topic work.
- Parents are asked to help from time to time such as on school trips or to help in class e.g. on DT day. Parents help on a weekly basis in Nursery. We offer parents the opportunity to communicate with the teacher /staff about their son at drop off or collection time and through the personal 'message book' which the child takes home and returns each day.
- In the Nursery, class newsletters are circulated to parents each term and as required for updates etc. A curriculum overview is also sent to parents at the start of each half term. The Nursery parents' board is also updated weekly to show what the boys have been doing and learning. In Reception, parents receive a termly topic overview and a daily newsletter (which is compiled with the children's help) to keep them informed about what their child has done at school each day. School newsletters and an events calendar are also provided on a termly basis.
- Hanging mobiles in the Nursery provide information for parents about the 6 learning areas.
- A parents evening is held in the first half of the Autumn term to discuss how well their son has settled in to his new class. Other parent evenings follow in the Spring term.
- Nursery and Reception reports are sent home at the end of the Spring and Summer terms.
- A Curriculum Handbook is given out to parents during the Autumn term for the Nursery class.
- Parents are asked for their feedback and ideas so that the EY's practice is reflective and always striving to improve.

- Information on emergency contacts and medical conditions is collected for each child and regularly updated.
- School events – Plays, Concerts etc are held regularly to which the parents are invited.
- A busy social and fundraising calendar of events is organised by the Parents Association.
- Class parent reps are elected each year.
- Arrival in the morning is spread over a half hour period so that there is less commotion for the children and an opportunity to talk to parents or carers as necessary.
- Parents are able to take advantage of the Early Years Education Grant, which gives a termly reduction in the fees for the Nursery and Reception children up to 5yrs old.

Whole school activities

Children in the Nursery join the rest of the school for assembly each week, and on other special occasions.

The Reception children lead an assembly once a term and attend all age appropriate school assemblies.

Children in the Reception class have PE lessons 4 days a week, which incorporates swimming in the Summer Term and Games at the field each week.

The Nursery and Reception classes have twice weekly music sessions as well as attend weekly hymn practice led by the music teacher. The Nursery attends hymn practice from the 2nd half of the Spring Term onwards. Both the Nursery and Reception classes participate in a Christmas production and in the school sports day. Children have access to the school library, PE equipment and cooking facilities.

The Curriculum

The six areas of learning and experience and the Early Learning Goals now provide a national framework for individual schools and other pre-five settings in planning, teaching and assessing the Early Years curriculum. They also provide an essential link between the pre-statutory curriculum and the Key Stage 1 programme of study. We have adopted these areas of learning and experience and the Foundation Stage developmental levels as the basis for our planning, as they provide a framework which enables us to achieve our aims for the under fives provision.

Our curriculum framework covers six areas of learning and experience -

- Language, communication and literacy development - talking, listening and encouraging children to become readers and writers.
- Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy- mathematical understanding and the foundations of numeracy, with a focus on practical mathematics.
- Knowledge and Understanding of the World - finding out about the world around them, other people and features of the natural and man

made world. These become a foundation for history, geography, technology, science.

- Physical development - physical control, mobility, awareness of space and manipulative skills in indoor and outdoor environments. Establishing positive attitudes towards a healthy and active way of life.
- Personal, social and emotional development - learning how to work and play, co-operate and function in a group, develop personal and moral values, understand themselves and respect others.
- Creative development - The development of imagination and the ability to communicate and to express ideas and feelings in creative ways.

Our curriculum is planned through a series of themes and topics, each of which offer experiences in all six areas. These topics can be changed from year to year to reflect the interests of the boys and staff.

The Reception classes have one topic per term. The Nursery has one main topic in the Autumn term and then two per term for the Spring and Summer.

Numeracy sessions are planned using the guidance in the National Frameworks for Numeracy and Literacy follows a school based curriculum. Our planning covers themes and core aspects (such as book experience, outside play activities, free exploration of natural materials and opportunities for writing).

Teachers and Assistants share planning which is organised on a weekly basis. Staff ensure that the children are encouraged to experience all areas of activity during the week, although they may not experience them all each day.

Experiences and activities are planned and monitored by staff and children have the opportunity to choose some activities which are monitored to ensure a balanced programme.

Please see the Nursery Curriculum Handbook for a detailed account of how the Foundation Stage is taught and managed for our three year olds.

Inclusion in the Foundation Stage

Every child is given the 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 Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that the children achieve at a pace suitable for their individual capabilities during their 2 years in Nursery and Reception. Some children progress beyond this point and are well on the way to Key Stage One. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of the boys, 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.

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 which 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.

Links with the community and other agencies

We use the opportunities offered by the local community in the following ways:

- Visiting local parks, shops and the local area.
- Museums, galleries and other areas of interest, which support the topics.
- People in the locality who come to talk to the children (police, Fire, nurses, local charities etc).
- Using local buildings such as the church for the Xmas carol service.

Professional and Local Services

We have links with the following services:

- Hounslow Early Years advisory services/ support staff.
- As part of the **Early Years Partnership** scheme the Nursery is supported by a wealth of expertise from the local borough and hence have access to a variety of support services when necessary eg speech and language therapy, educational psychologist.
- We are also in contact with independent agencies if the parents prefer this route.
-

Assessment and Record Keeping

For whole school aspects of assessment, recording and reporting, please see the school policy on assessment. On entry to the Nursery we use observations to begin to assess children across the 6 areas of learning,

according to the developmental statements. For further information about our assessment procedures please see the Nursery Curriculum Handbook In Reception national baseline assessment (PIPS) is carried out at the start and end of the school year. In general our assessment procedures are:

Nursery

- Observations recorded on 'observation slips' and kept as evidence and to inform planning/assessment.
- Planned observations of individuals done on a rotation basis and analysed to inform planning and overall assessment
- Observations gathered and used to assess children using the FS statements.
- Information gathered during teacher led activities on checklist/comment sheets.
- Photographic evidence collected.
- Evidence files to support children's place in the FS
- Group, individual or sometimes class targets are set to help children focus on their own progress.
- Team self evaluation, planning and review on a weekly basis.
- Daily plans based on current short term learning and therefore not too prescriptive. 'Planning is not a promise!'

Reception

- Observations, involving the teacher and other adults as appropriate.
- PIPS baseline assessment scheme used. Assessments returned in November and we then use them to informally identify patterns of attainment within the cohort of children. Baseline information shared with parents at the parental consultation meeting in November.
- Child's placement on the FS (from Nursery) used to inform planning in Reception.
- Regular planned assessments carried out with regard to child's progress in all curriculum areas and recorded by class teacher.
- Individual portfolio/files kept in school to show evidence/ progression.
- Two written reports to parents during the year.
- Regular team planning and meetings with all EY staff to ensure continuity within the Foundation Stage Curriculum.
- Class/individual target setting as above.

Transition from Reception to Year 1

A recent study by Nottingham City practitioners (2004) has found that moving to year 1 from the Foundation Stage can, for many children, be a worry. We are currently thinking about ways to smooth this period of transition. Some thoughts/suggestions are;

- Provide opportunity for year 1 staff to meet the boys in Reception prior to starting.
- Boys able to visit new classroom and get to know teacher and assistants.
- Take a current display to put up in the new classroom.
- Year 1 teachers become familiar with the Foundation Stage curriculum and attend courses on this area.

Health and Safety

Please see school Health and Safety Policy. In addition to this we have compiled a Risk Assessment for all areas of the building and the potential hazards to all Early Years' pupils.

- Aspects of health and keeping safe are given much importance and reinforced across the indoor and outdoor curriculum.
- The nursery keeps an accident book as well as the accident book kept in the school medical room. All minor accidents reported to parents via first aid slip, message book or telephone message.
- Toilet accidents are always dealt with promptly and sensitively.
- All equipment purchased complies with British Standards and is judged suitable for the age range of the children who will be using it.
- Equipment is checked regularly and replaced when necessary.
- Equipment is cleaned regularly and given deep cleaning during the holidays.
- Small repairs are noted in school maintenance book and repaired accordingly.
- Nursery and Reception Staff are reminded to keep all adult equipment (e.g. stapler, large scissors, knives, etc) which pose a danger for young children, out of reach.
- Staff are reminded to be vigilant at all times to reduce the risk of accidents.

Updated February 2010