



Freegrounds Infant School Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

1. 1. Introduction

Freegrounds Infant School is a Rights Respecting school. Children and adults work together to recognise and act upon the rights of the child within our school, our local community and the wider world. We believe that by understanding their own rights children learn to respect and value the rights of others. This policy exemplifies these rights and our practise aims to ensure that the following rights are adhered to:

Article 3 The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.

Article 28 Every child has the right to an education.

Article 29 Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full.

2. Equal opportunities

Freegrounds Infant School will endeavour to offer equal opportunity of access to all children regardless of gender, race, religion, ability or disability.

3. Rationale

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Freegrounds Infant School, children join the Reception class in the year that they turn five. In partnership with parents and carers we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life.

We endeavour to ensure that children "learn and develop well and keep healthy and safe." We aim to support children in their learning through "teaching and experiences that gives children the broad range of skills that provide the right foundation for good progress through school and in life." (Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2012)

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child - developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
- Positive relationships - supporting the children in becoming strong and independent.
- Enabling environments - where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child.
- Learning and developing - An acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates.

4. Aims

We aim to 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.

5. Enabling Environments

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident and secure and challenged. At Freegrounds, the Early Years classrooms are organised to support all the different areas of learning. The shared area can be accessed by all of the children and provides a different learning opportunity from the classrooms. The outdoor learning area provides experiences that cannot be accessed indoors and are based on children developing all areas of learning as well as effective characteristics for learning. Adopting this approach in Early Years continues on from the high quality provision the children will have had access to at pre-school and nursery. This offers a rich play and learning experience for children. It allows each child to progress at his/her own pace, it gives children practice in choosing, and in dealing with the consequences of choice, and it encourages a more flexible and open-ended use of the group's resources. The Early Years environment is organised effectively to reflect this and provides the children with access to high quality resources to support their learning and contribute to outstanding teaching and learning. The environment is organised as follows;

Indoor classrooms:

- Writing area and role play
- Creative area
- Maths Area
- Investigation area
- Stimulating book corner

Shared area - Small world play, finding out and construction and jigsaws

Outside area - We are also very lucky to have such a super outdoor learning area. We always have the door open and children can choose whether to learn indoors or outdoors and freely move between the areas. Outside, we have sand, water, construction, physical, writing, messy play plus gardening, digging and exploring the weather! Computing is embedded in all areas of learning.

In each of the different areas we have continuous provision, which is available for the children all year round, and enhanced provision, which is a specific challenge or activity. We change our enhancements each week. These enhancements are planned **based on the child's interests, strengths and needs**.

Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and following children's interest. Effective planning is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests and experiences. These observations are recorded in the children's individual learning journals. These are kept through the computer system, Tapestry. There is also a Learning Journal Book, where evidence from phonics, maths and writing and any other independent hard evidence is kept.

Play based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed through modelling and questioning to further individual learning. A mixture of whole class, group and individual teaching will be used by the class teacher and LSA to enable effective learning and progress for all children.

A system of 'plan, do review' is used before Discovery time (child initiated play based learning time). This is an opportunity for the children to think about their learning before, carry out their ideas and then reflect on their learning with their peers. This is based around four questions; Where are you going to go for your learning? What are you going to do for your learning? Why are you going to do that? How is it going to help your learning?

6. Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are "prime areas," and four "specific areas."

The prime areas are

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

The specific areas are

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

Through careful assessments and observations, including information provided by parents and other settings, children's development levels are assessed. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. However, if a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. This may also include a discussion with the Inclusion manager in order to access Special Educational Needs support.

At Freegrounds Infant School:

"Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is used as an essential part children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. There is an on-going judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and

interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1." (Statutory Framework for EYFS 2012)

Planning and guided children's activities will reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. At Freegrounds Infant School, we support children in using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning.

These are;

- **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.

(Taken from statutory framework for the EYFS 2012)

The outdoor learning environment is organised to give children the opportunity to develop in all areas of learning in a hands on practical way, which would not be possible to achieve in the indoor environment.

Religious Education is also taught in the reception classes in accordance with Hampshire guidelines.

7. Assessment for Learning

At the beginning of the year teachers use information from parents, pre-school settings and their baseline assessments to identify children's starting points and planning is then varied accordingly.

A meeting takes place after school on a Monday where the Early Years team get together to discuss their observations and feedback regarding the children's learning during the day. Following this meeting new learning opportunities are planned or modified to meet the needs of the children.

Careful notes are made of children's learning and whole class assessment sheets used to record children's progress and attainment. These assessment grids are updated weekly for Reading and Writing and Numbers and Shape, Space and Measure, depending on which area of Mathematics is being taught. There are also separate assessment grids for all 17 areas of learning that cover each of the different assessment periods.

The whole class assessment sheet is updated regularly to give an overall picture of where children are currently working within the age band. The information on the assessment sheets will refer to tapestry observations, direct observations of the child through child initiated time and evidence of child speech.

Tapestry is used as a tool to collect evidence of the child's learning along with a Learning Journal which has any 'hard' evidence and any work completed as part of a guided group. There will be a balance between child initiated learning and adult led activities. Each child will also have a Reading Journal in line with the school's English policy. One to one reading will be recorded each half term in the Reading Journal, as well as filmed on Tapestry.

Phonics assessments will take place each half term identifying which sounds the children can read and write. These assessments will be put into each child's Reading Journal and the child's individual folder. A whole class phonics tracking will be updated each half term and kept in the EYFS class assessment folder to show progress for each child. During the Summer Term the child will be assessed using a phonics screening booklet, reading the first 20 words in the booklet to reflect the sounds that the children have been taught this year. This information will be recorded on the phonics assessment tracker and a copy will also be given to the year 1 team in preparation for the transition.

4 points throughout the year, an assessment of each child's development will be recorded and then data will be produced for each class. The data will also include tracking of vulnerable groups, term of birth, gender and steps of progress. The EYFS Leader will then create a cohort report which will be shared with SLT and Governors.

8. A Unique Child

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 sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

9. 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. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See Whole School Safeguarding Children Policy)

"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 Freegrounds Infant 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 2012.

We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare and safeguarding of children.
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- 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.
- maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

10. Positive Relationships

At Freegrounds Infant School, we recognise that children learn to be strong independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

11. Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- the children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during transfer sessions;
- support children through the transition from pre-school to Reception with the children attending part time during the first two weeks. This is also to support staff and parents in getting to know each other as well as the children
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school and again during the first half term of the child's Reception year in order to detail how we aim to work with their child
- providing parent workshops on reading and phonics, writing and Mathematics and Tapestry;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents twice a year at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: home learning, celebration assemblies, school visits, parent days;
- Providing parents access to their child's learning journal through Tapestry;
- providing parents an opportunity to celebrate their child's learning and development by completing observations through Tapestry;
- written contact through Reading Journals as well as the acknowledgement that parents can ring school to contact key workers
- by providing a quiet and confidential area where parents are able to discuss any concerns

12. Transition

12.1 From Pre-school / Feeder settings

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the Reception year, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition

- parents are invited to a meeting to ensure they know about school procedures and allocation of classes and any concerns they may want to express
- the children are invited to two separate visits to their reception class. One of these visits is without parents
- keyworkers from the main feeder pre-schools make visits to school with their children. The number of visits will depend on the child's needs and how much information gathering is required in order to support the child's transition

- children requiring extra support will have additional visits regardless of their setting. Often these children will have been identified as requiring additional support or are part of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) process

11.2 - From EYFS Class to Key Stage 1

During the final term in EYFS, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile includes on-going observation, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile reports for individuals and meet with the EYFS team. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

During the Summer Term a range of transition activities will be put into place such as timetable changes in EYFS in preparation for Key Stage 1. The children will also have the opportunity to spend a morning in their new classroom with their new Year 1 Teacher.

13. Inclusion/Special Educational Needs (SEN)

All children and their families are valued at Freegrounds Infant School. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage and the schools Inclusion manager is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school's Inclusion policy for SEN.

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