



Spring Gardens Primary School

Foundation Stage Policy

Introduction

This document has been written to provide information for members of staff, governors, parents / carers, trainee teachers and other visitors to Spring Gardens Primary School, including advisors and inspectors.

Rationale

A child's early years at school are extremely important. They lay the foundations for all future learning and influence attitudes to education. The early years are critical in a child's development. Children develop rapidly during this time including physically, emotionally, intellectually and socially and it is our aim to provide children with as many new experiences as possible in order for all these skills to develop.

Aims of the Foundation Stage

At Spring Gardens Primary School, we aim to provide a secure and caring environment where children can reach their full potential emotionally, intellectually, socially, physically, culturally and spiritually in a relaxed and happy atmosphere. We aim to ensure that the transition between home and school is smooth and effective and we aim to build positive relationships with parents / carers. We feel that school should be a happy, caring place, where goodwill, friendliness, empathy and understanding exist between teachers, children and parents / carers.

The curriculum

Children in the Foundation Stage (from Nursery to Reception) work towards the Early Learning Goals set out in the statutory document from the Department of Education: Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021.

There are three prime areas of the curriculum and four specific areas.

Prime

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal Social and Emotional Development

Specific

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

These areas of the curriculum are all underpinned by four guiding principles outlined in the framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. These are:-

- **A unique child** - every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self assured.
- **Positive relationships** - children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- **Enabling environments** - the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning. Children learn and develop best in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- **Learning and Development** - children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected.

At Spring Gardens Primary School we aim to ensure that these themes underpin our work with all children. When planning the curriculum, teachers use the framework guidance to ensure that children develop the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes needed in order to achieve the early learning goals towards the end of the Foundation Stage. We recognise that every child is unique and at all times we aim to deliver a curriculum that meets each child's stage of development . Throughout all curriculum delivery we ensure that our children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are planned for and supported.

Method and delivery

The statutory guidance for the EYFS states that there are three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:-

The learning characteristics:

- playing and exploring
- active learning
- creating and thinking critically

At Spring Gardens Primary School, we believe that playing and exploring, active learning and thinking skills are all fundamental to a child's development and these can be achieved through planned curricular activities where the emphasis is on play. The curriculum will be delivered both indoors and outdoors.

Play

Play is recognised as an important purposeful activity where children develop their learning and personal skills. It provides an opportunity to develop children's language by

interacting, communicating and expressing ideas with peers and adults. It provides opportunities to practise and develop a range of skills and also helps children to build their self-confidence and self-awareness.

Play encourages children to have some control over their actions. Children learn to interact and work with others, in turn developing social and co-operation skills. It helps to encourage independent thinkers and develop curiosity. Play develops concentration, stimulates interest and provides satisfaction and a sense of achievement. It allows children to learn through first hand experiences.

Play provides a basis for learning. At Spring Gardens Primary School children are motivated and challenged through play. They are encouraged to work collaboratively and co-operatively. Throughout the Foundation Stage, staff ensure that the play is challenging and scaffolds children's learning. Staff implement play based activities across the curriculum to ensure a variety of learning experiences for children. In both Nursery and Reception children have the opportunities to initiate their own play alongside planned and structured activities led by staff.

Planning the curriculum

The Spring Gardens EYFS curriculum is carefully planned to ensure that it is progressive across all areas of learning. The EYFS staff work together to plan medium term and weekly plans following the statutory framework for the EYFS. Children's interests and fascinations are incorporated within these. The Foundation Stage staff follow a clear progression in skills throughout the EYFS, to ensure children make continuous progress. The medium term planning takes place on a termly basis and links to topics. Learning objectives are identified according to the children's different stages of development. Each week teaching staff complete weekly plans, outlining child initiated, adult directed and adult led activities across the curriculum. Activities are differentiated to support and challenge children's learning according to their needs and abilities. As part of the daily routine children choose where they would like to work (play). Staff closely observe individual's likes, dislikes, personal interests and strengths and use this to inform future planning.

Baseline

Once a child is admitted to school a baseline assessment is undertaken. This is to establish a profile of attainment on entering school. At Spring Gardens, we recognise that parents / carers are a child's first educators and many children have had Pre School learning experiences in toddler groups, play groups or nurseries. Children enter school at varying stages of development and the baseline assessment provides us with an indication of each child's stage of development and may also identify children who may have special needs. The information collected is then used as a basis for tracking future progress.

Throughout the year assessment records are kept to monitor achievements and set targets.

In Nursery, the baseline is carried out during the first six weeks of children attending our school. Every child admitted to Spring Gardens during the nursery year is assessed using the EYFS framework and data is entered on to our assessment tracking system.

The baseline assessment tracks children's achievements across the prime and specific areas of learning and consists of:

- A pre-entry profile completed by the parent or carer, which contains general data, health information and cultural information as well as more child specific information to aid settling in.
- Observations of children during their self-initiated play.
- Detailed and specific assessment of children is carried out through a mixture of adult led, child initiated and independent tasks across all seven areas of learning.

On entry to Reception, a baseline assessment is undertaken in order to indicate prior achievement.

The baseline consists of:

- Data from our internal EYFS tracking document (if the child has attended our nursery)
- School admission form / multi ethnic information form (completed by the parent).
- Observations of children during their self-initiated play.
- Detailed and specific assessment of children is carried out through a mixture of adult led, child initiated and independent tasks across all seven areas of learning.
- Initial Reception entry onto the EYFS tracking document (Target Tracker).

In addition we complete the DFE Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) which must be undertaken by all children within the first six weeks of entering Reception.

Assessment and record keeping

Throughout the year, ongoing assessment in the prime and specific areas of learning enables the completion of the EYFS tracking document in both Nursery and Reception. This is done through observational assessments during child initiated play, anecdotal assessments, formative assessments, photographs and samples of work. This document is completed throughout the year for every child and indicates the progress they have made. It is used to plan next steps and helps to identify children who may have any additional needs or those who may require interventions to further develop their learning and understanding.

At the end of Reception, children's attainment is assessed against the Early Learning Goals. Parents / carers are kept informed about their child's progress throughout the

year. This may occur informally on a day to day basis, at specific parents / carers meetings throughout the year or in some cases in meetings between parents / carers, teachers and external practitioners e.g. the speech and language team. Any concerns regarding a child's progress will be shared with parents / carers as soon as possible. A written report is given to parents / carers about their child's progress at the end of each year.

Staff

We recognise that an appropriate ratio of adults to children is necessary to ensure a high quality education for young children. Our Nursery has a morning and an afternoon session, which can each accommodate 26 children. It is staffed by one teacher and one teaching assistant. Our two Reception classes can each accommodate 30 children and are staffed by two teachers and two teaching assistants.

There are also other adults involved in the Foundation Stage. These may include PPA teachers, trainee teaching assistants, 1:1 support staff, parents / carers, volunteers, outside agencies and trainee teachers.

Although staff are based in Reception or Nursery, there are times when they work across the Foundation Stage. This helps to develop continuity between Nursery and Reception and ease the transition process at the end of Nursery into Reception.

The Foundation Stage staff are responsible for:

- Planning the curriculum
- Organising the learning environment both indoors and outdoors
- Monitoring and assessing children's learning
- Communicating with parents, carers and outside agencies
- Acting upon knowledge gained

Regular Foundation Stage meetings are held to provide the opportunity to share good practice, agree frameworks and common approaches.

Organisation

In the Foundation Stage the organisation of each day is very important as a regular routine gives children a sense of security, belonging and responsibility and develops their understanding of time. We aim to provide this through a structured framework and daily routine, as well as basic classroom and playground rules. Both the Nursery and Reception class have a similar routine that is in place each day. The daily routines include children's child initiated play, adult led activities, large and small group work, snack times, outdoor activities and tidy up times. In addition, the children are encouraged to develop a sense of identity, become independent and to value their environment by taking care of the resources that are within it, both inside and outside.

Inclusion

Children come to school from different home backgrounds and cultures. We recognise this and aim to meet every child's needs. At Spring Gardens Primary School we believe every pupil has the right to develop his or her potential. We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity regardless of gender, class, race, belief, disability or sexual orientation, and we aim to provide equality of access for all.

Risk Assessment

The safeguarding of children is paramount. Risk assessments are in place for the Foundation Stage learning environments, both indoors and outdoors.

Child Protection and safeguarding

It is the job of all staff to safeguard children. All Foundation Stage staff have had child protection training and know the procedures to follow if a child makes a disclosure or if staff are concerned about a child's safety or welfare.

Admission and Attendance

Transition from home to school

We aim:

- To ensure a smooth and happy transition from home to school.
- To acknowledge that the parents / carers are the child's first educators, and to be aware of their continuing role in his/her education.
- To foster links with parents / carers and develop an effective partnership to the benefit of the child.
- To foster the importance of regular attendance and punctuality.

Nursery

The Nursery at Spring Gardens Primary School has both a morning and an afternoon session. Children attend 5 half-day sessions. Parents / carers have the choice, where possible, of a morning or afternoon place.

Most children are admitted to Nursery in the Autumn term. If spaces are available, we are able to admit children on the day after their 3rd birthday. At the end of the summer term, a letter is sent to parents / carers offering their child a nursery place and welcoming them to Spring Gardens Primary School. Parents / carers are then invited to attend an open day in the summer term when they can meet the Nursery staff and arrange 1:1 meetings to discuss their child's individual needs. Basic Nursery and School procedures are discussed and the Foundation Stage philosophy and curriculum explained. Parents / carers are given a booklet and admission pack which contains additional

information. Parents / carers who do not attend the open day are sent the relevant information by post.

When children begin Nursery, they stay for an hour on their first day. If they are happy and settled during the Nursery session and can separate from their carer with minimal upset, then they will stay for the full morning or afternoon session from the next day. We acknowledge that parents / carers know their child's emotional needs best and if children need a longer settling in period, then we are flexible in providing this; extending the time a child stays over a period of days to ensuring that they are happy and confident when in school.

Reception

In the summer term prior to admission, a letter is sent to parents / carers informing them their child has a place in school. Parents / carers are invited to a meeting with the Head Teacher and Reception staff. Parents / carers are given a pack explaining the admission procedure. Parents / carers are given the opportunity to look around the Reception classrooms and chat with staff. Parents / carers who do not attend are sent the relevant information.

Transition

We recognise that this can be a difficult time for children, and as a staff we aim to ensure that transition between year groups is as smooth as possible. The procedures in place include:

- Our Nursery holds an open morning and afternoon where new parents / carers and children can come and spend time in the setting and chat to staff.
- 1 to 1 discussions/ meetings (this may be a phone call) are arranged with the nursery teacher so that detailed discussions about each child can take place before they begin school.
- The nursery children spend time in the Reception learning environment during the summer term to familiarise themselves with the staff and classrooms.
- Reception staff will visit children who have not been to Spring Gardens Nursery, in the settings that they attend, during the summer term. Staff will have a detailed handover with the Nursery provider.
- All staff will have detailed handovers to the next year group teacher.
- Children who have not attended our school nursery, will be offered open days to attend with their parents / carers.
- Whole school activities that foster a sense of being part of a wider school community are encouraged.
- Booklets are sent home before the summer, containing photos of the staff, learning environment, outdoor areas etc.

Parental involvement

We value the role parents / carers play in their child's education and aim at all times to develop and foster close links with parents / carers. We recognise that children learn best when parents / carers and staff work in partnership. Throughout the Foundation Stage parents / carers are kept informed by newsletters and Dojo messages. We encourage parents / carers to take part in class showcases and assemblies. Parents / carers are invited to attend various workshops and courses and we encourage parents / carers to come into school to listen to children read. We aim at all times to develop close links with parents / carers to ensure that we work together to meet the needs of their child.

K. Dexter EYFS Lead
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