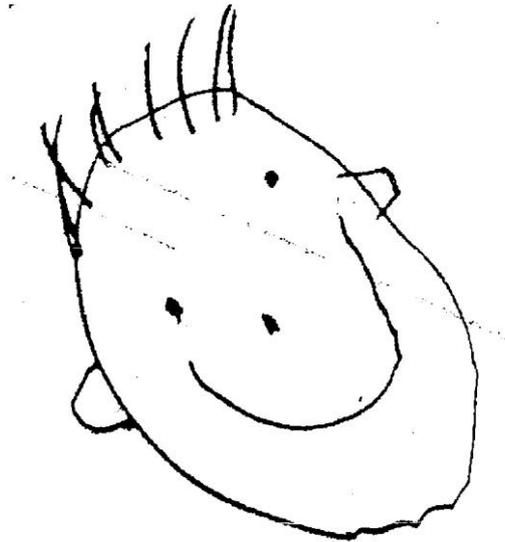




Every Child Matters Every Day Counts

Stoneb^w



Early Years
Foundation Stage Policy
June 2015

Rationale

As the Foundation Stage is the period from when a child is three to the end of the reception year, we feel it is a distinct stage and important in its own right as it gives children secure foundations for later learning. Young children learn best in an environment which promotes active, hands on learning and provides opportunities for both planned and self initiated play.

All policies, in all areas of the school curriculum, make reference to the 'foundation stage'. We see this as being important in linking the foundation stage with KS1 and KS2, informing colleagues of changes in early years practice and meeting 'Stonebow's School Aims'.

Principles/Aims

In line with the Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage we aim to provide a high quality curriculum by:

- Promoting a successful partnership between parents and school.
- Providing a secure environment through which children can become confident and independent learners.
- Recognising and respecting the cultural differences and abilities of all children.
- Building on what the children already know and extending their interests.
- Using varied approaches and teaching strategies, based on the children's learning needs and styles.
- Providing opportunities for children to express their feelings and emotions.
- Providing opportunities for the children to extend their natural curiosity and desire to question.
- Ensuring that the learning environment is well planned and organised to provide rich and stimulating experiences, both indoors and outdoors.
- We acknowledge all children are individuals and recognise differences in race, gender and ability and aim to promote and extend their learning.

Purposes

“Children are born ready, able and eager to learn. They actively reach out to interact with other people, and in the world around them. Development is not an automatic process, however. It depends on each unique child having opportunities to interact in positive relationships and enabling environments.

The four themes of the EYFS underpin all the guidance. The document - Development Matters - shows how these themes, and the principles that inform them, work together for children in the EYFS.” (Development Matters in the EYFS)

Here at Stonebow our approach is through talk, enquiry and play, with the aim of developing positive attitudes to learning, in which individual achievements are valued. We endeavour to provide the experiences and support which enable children to develop a positive sense of themselves.

We believe the curriculum is all the children see, do, hear and feel while they are in school and includes planned and unplanned activities. Children’s existing skills and interests are built upon and developed by the Early Years Team working together and making activities imaginative, enjoyable and fun. Children are cared for and provided with a stimulating, and challenging environment to give them the best possible foundation for future learning by nurturing enthusiasm, creativity and developing enquiring minds. In partnership with parents, carers and external agencies, we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life.

‘The Early Learning Goals’ set out what is the expected level of development for most children by the end of the Foundation Stage (these can be found in the 2012 EYFS Curriculum Guidance). We work hard to ensure that most children will have reached these expected levels by the end of the Foundation Stage. Some children may go beyond and exceed them in some areas and then new challenges will be provided, whilst other children may require extra help and support to reach expected levels of development.

The following pages demonstrate some ways in which we deliver The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe.

Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (EYFS)

THE FOUR EARLY YEARS THEMES	WHAT DOES THAT MEAN FOR US?	WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE IN OUR SCHOOL?
<p>The Uniqueness of each Child</p> 	<p>Every child is a confident learner from birth, who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition that the child comes first • Individualised 'Learning Journey' records • Support and challenge for all children • Children making personal choices throughout their learning journey • Safe, secure environment
<p>The importance of Positive Relationships</p> 	<p>Creating strong, secure and caring relationships with all our children alongside respectful and open partnerships with parents and carers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informative induction meetings with parents before school begins • Home visits • Open door policy • Reading and Writing evening meetings • Consultations throughout the year • Parent contributions to Learning Journeys and Homelinks/ Reading Record Books • Working with other professionals and experts beyond school
<p>The high quality Enabling Environment</p> 	<p>Our high quality learning environment both indoors and out stimulates, supports and challenges children. Our first rate resources and adults within the environment are critical in order to support the learning and development of each child.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor area with a range of learning areas available everyday • A rich variety of stimulating, high quality resources inside and out • Clearly organised resources, readily accessible to children to encourage their independence and ability to initiate and extend their own learning • Qualified, experienced teachers, nursery nurses and learning support assistants with flexible provision
<p>The importance of 'play' in Learning and Development</p> 	<p>Children learn in different ways and at different rates. Play underpins all development and learning for young children in creativity, socially, physically, emotionally and intellectually. It stimulates, excites and motivates children to explore and learn in a fun way!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exciting and enticing learning topics • Carefully planned activities • Enriching resources • Supportive, knowledgeable adults who can meet the learning & developmental needs of each child • Hearing, listening and responding to each child's voice • Play based approach, active & fun

Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (EYFS)

The 7 areas of Learning and Development

“All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.”

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage)

These three areas are:

The Prime Areas

Communication and Language

Listening
Speaking
Questioning
Acting
Storytelling

Physical Development

Fine motor skills:
cutting, drawing, mark
Gross motor skills:
climbing, balancing
Throwing, catching
Dressing, personal hygiene,
Making healthy food choices

Personal, Social, Emotional Dev.

Behaviour, feelings & attitudes
Taking turns & problem solving
Care & respect for all
Positive relationships,
co-operation & independence
Concentration, motivation

There are four other specific areas of learning, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The Specific Areas

Literacy

Letters & Sounds
Words & rhyme
Reading
Mark making
Writing

Mathematics

Counting
Understanding
& using numbers
Calculating &
problem solving
Shapes, spaces
& measures
Patterns, games

Understanding the World

Investigating, exploring,
comparing, observing,
questioning
Exploring places
Finding out about our lives,
past and present
Information technology
Constructing, designing,
Cultures & beliefs of our
own and of others

Expressive Arts & Design

Imagining, role playing,
expressing ideas & feelings
Creating, drawing,
painting, sculpting
Designing, making,
adapting
Singing, creating sounds,
using instruments
Dancing, moving

Guidelines

Induction/admission arrangements

We believe this is a very important time for both children and carers. Our procedure has undergone many changes and we continue to evaluate its effectiveness. This is done by talking to parents, children and pre school practitioners, sending home questionnaires and team meetings.

- Parents are invited to an informal meeting when they are told about 'what their child will need when they start school' and the general 'day to day running of a reception class'. Slides and photographs are shown; booklets and handbooks are distributed and questions and concerns answered. This also provides an opportunity for carers to meet their child's teacher and nursery nurse and to visit the teaching and learning environment for their child.
- An optional afternoon visit is made to school, where parents are given the freedom to stay with, or to leave their child.
- Visits are made to the main feeder preschools by a member of staff. These are informal, yet provide an opportunity for the children to meet a member of staff in a familiar setting and for the preschool practitioners to offer any relevant information.
- Initial sessions with child and parent are carried out over the first 2 days of the autumn term. Each child is given a morning or afternoon visit. The children are accompanied by a parent/carer. Indoor and outdoor activities are offered and staff are available to talk to children and adults. During these sessions there is time for an informal chat with the child and parent/carer. This forms the basis for a partnership we believe is fundamental in having a positive impact on children's learning.
- The children then start school on a part time basis for the first 2 weeks.

Organisation and daily routines

Practitioners are flexible in their classroom organisation and respond to the needs and interests of the children, building on and extending children's knowledge, experiences and skills. Self registration has been introduced and the children are encouraged to be independent and confident when choosing and carrying out activities. The outdoors is seen as an extension to the indoors and free-flow play is a key feature of our practice. As young children learn best holistically, the day is organised in an integrated way incorporating all areas of learning.

Planning

Planning is carried out weekly in teams. This provides the opportunity to use all practitioners' skills and expertise to discuss ideas and activities, and to look at children's achievements, experiences, interests and progress and to use this information to inform future planning. Planning ensures that the learning environment is vibrant, purposeful, challenging, supportive and effective. It provides opportunities for children to develop the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes to enable children to achieve the 'early learning goals'.

We aim to accommodate the different ways children learn by planning for the same objective in a range of different ways.

Using our observations and informal assessments of children helps take account of their needs, and capitalises on unplanned events, particularly those initiated by the children.

Planning is covered by:

- Medium Term Plans – Letters and Sounds progression of skills and Learning intentions taken from the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance).
- Short term plans - the day to day details of experiences and activities - assessment and observation opportunities -deployment of adults - next step - resources – differentiation

During the children's initial half term, planning is kept to a minimum. This gives practitioners time to make informal assessments and to get to know the children in a relaxed atmosphere. It lets children learn by building upon their own interests and needs and it allows opportunities for exploration of equipment and resources. Practitioners encourage children to try new activities and experiences and develop independence and confidence. The children are involved in agreeing codes of behaviour and taking responsibility for their implementation. We believe there should be a balanced mix of adult and child initiated activities, and work hard to promote children's independence and confidence.

Assessment

Judgments are based on a wide range of evidence from all adults who interact with the child at Stonebow and from information provided by the parent/carer.

- Account is taken of information given by previous practitioners.
- An on-going dialogue with parents is encouraged. Information is given at the initial meeting with parents and continues with parent consultations, home links books, learning diaries, questionnaires etc. (see Partnership with Parents)
- The children are involved in the assessment process through planned and unplanned discussions, the selection of work/photographs for their learning diaries, the setting of targets.
- Ongoing observations and assessments are used to complete the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.
- Observation/Next steps are used to make observations across the 7 areas of learning and to highlight points for development.
- An 'Early Years Foundation Stage Profile' is compiled for each child during their reception year based upon observations.

Staff Deployment

See individual job descriptions.

Staff Development

- An audit is made to look at the needs for staff training. The school development plan is referred to and the 'Foundation Stage' training budget is used accordingly.
- All practitioners are encouraged to develop professionally.
- Centrally organised courses are accessed; 'inset' days are attended by all staff, as are the 'Early Years Development Group' meetings.

- Our Nursery Nurse also works on an 'Outdoor Project' for the LEA 'Foundation Stage Advisory Team', once again receiving relevant training.
- Our Nursery Nurse and Learning Support Assistant are trained in Paediatric first aid.
- LSA's working with foundation stage children receive training at both inset and through centrally organised courses.

Resources

We aim to provide

- Resources which are readily accessible to the children to encourage independence and ability to initiate and extend own learning.
- A bright attractive, orderly and stimulating environment.
- Areas which offer the opportunity to be quiet, comfortable and relaxed as well as more active and creative.
- A variety of floor coverings which allow for more messy activities.
- Spaces which can be used for large scale building and play.
- A variety of working levels.
- Areas for imaginative play.
- Facilities for ICT.
- An outdoor area which has a variety of different surfaces, textures, levels e.g. grass, paving, garden, seating
- An environment free from stereotypical images and discriminatory practice

We aim to provide indoor and outdoor provision. These two areas are linked together and reflect the total curriculum.

At Stonebow we offer:

- An attractive and comfortable place with a range of books.
- Sand - wet and dry with a variety of equipment.
- Water with equipment.
- Other tactile materials for messy play e.g. shaving foam, slime, gloop, flour, salt.
- Mathematical and science equipment.
- A variety of paper and tools for mark-making.
- Provision for imaginative play.
- Provision for small world play.
- A creative workshop with media such as paint, clay, wood, recyclable materials.
- A variety of small and large construction equipment.
- A computer and other ICT equipment including Interactive whiteboards.
- Cooking materials.
- Provision for growing things and living creatures (if appropriate).
- Materials, equipment and displays that reflect the community the children come from and the wider world.
- Collections of artefacts and interactive displays linked to topics and children's interests.

- A variety of outdoor play equipment and indoor equipment to promote physical development.
- A variety of sound makers.
- Visits from a variety of people from the wider community.
- Visits to the local community and beyond.

Partnership with Parents

We acknowledge the fact that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and realise that by promoting a strong partnership the results have a positive impact on children's development and learning. This is achieved by:

- Recognising and encouraging the part parents play in their child's education. The foundations are laid during the 'induction period', when we work together to form a shared picture of each child. This then helps us to plan for the children's first days in school.
- Children have a short period of part time attendance and then can begin school full time after the 'head count date'. Nevertheless arrangements for settling in are flexible to give the children time to feel secure and for parents to discuss any special circumstances, needs or concerns.
- We have an 'open door' policy. Parents are welcomed in to discuss progress, worries, concerns and achievements.
- Family and friends are used to support the learning environment and opportunities provided.
- Informing parents about the curriculum. This is done in a variety of ways. 'Principles for Early Years Education' and 'Reading and Writing' evenings are held early on in the school year, photographs are displayed under the areas of learning, a 'Parents Guide to Starting School' is handed out to parents during the induction period, the topic overview is also available to parents at the beginning of each new topic.
- Weekly news letters inform parents about topic themes, weekly focuses and gives ideas and play activities to aid in their child's learning and development. A 'homelinks' book acts as a record/diary for home/school generated learning.
- Children are encouraged (with the help of their parents) to bring in topic related information from home.
- Reading record books are sent home to give parents ideas on how they can help their children become readers.
- Parent evenings are held each term. An initial report highlights how the children have settled and at the end of the year a report is sent home. Parents are welcomed in at this time, with their child, to look at the work around the room, imaginative play areas, activities on offer etc. Targets are also set at these meetings.
- End of term 'get-togethers' are an opportunity to celebrate work

Transition to Year 1

- We work hard with Year 1 practitioners to ensure this transition is an easy one. We meet regularly to evaluate how quickly and easily the children settle and how we can make improvements.
- The foundation stage children are involved in many KS1 activities: singing, assemblies, visits, stories, the sharing of children's work, special celebrations etc
- The foundation stage children also attend whole school assemblies on a Friday when we celebrate children's achievements.
- Children independently take information into school, collect resources etc
- Their work is displayed in school.
- All assessments, records and reporting are passed on to the child's next teacher.
- Colleagues meet on a regular basis to discuss children's progress and to pass on other relevant information.
- The needs of the children are taken into account when arranging new classes.
- Year 1 teachers work hard to continue an active approach to learning.
- During the summer term the children are given the opportunity to play on the field and big playground.
- Children are also visited by their new teacher and make visits to their new class.
- In the Autumn term foundation stage practitioners ensure they visit the children in their new year 1 class, at lunch and at playtimes

SEN Provision

Practitioners plan for each child's individual needs. We believe that treating everyone the same is not the same as treating everyone equally.

- We work together with parent/carers, pre school practitioners, and staff from other agencies, to provide the best learning opportunities for individual children.
- We meet regularly with parents to discuss progress and to develop strategies to meet specific needs.
- IEP's are used to set reasonable expectations and to monitor progress.
- The Head Teacher and SEN coordinator in school is made aware of individual children's needs.
- Where possible extra support from adults is provided.
- A multi sensory approach is used.
- Where possible the environment is adapted.
- Positive behaviour is encouraged and promoted.
- All children are encouraged to value and respect their own contributions and those of others.
- Adults act as role models.

English as an additional language

Learning opportunities are provided to help children develop their English.

- Children are encouraged to use their home language in their play and learning.

- English is learnt 'in context, through practical, meaningful experiences and interaction with others'.
- Adults use gestures, signs, facial expressions and other visual support to communicate with children.
- Parents are once again seen as invaluable in supporting their children's learning.
- Practitioners endeavour to find out about children's ethnic background, faith, cultural heritage and home experiences, so that familiar experiences and interests can be used as a starting point for teaching and learning.
- Children are encouraged to show respect to others.
- Bilingual support is sought when necessary.
- Dual language books, posters, signs are provided.
- Positive images of all children are displayed.
- Resources from the wider community are available for the children to access independently.
- Topics are planned to naturally incorporate aspects of different cultures to avoid tokenism.

Review and further developments

Policy review date - Summer 2016

Arrangements for monitoring success - this will be shared, evaluated and monitored in staff meetings and team meetings. Ongoing evaluations will monitor its success, as will the achievements of the children in the Foundation Stage and the progress they make in KS1 and KS2. Other methods of evaluation to further develop practice will be outlined in the school development plan.

Arrangements for involving the school governors - this policy will be shared with the governing body of the school.

Summer 2015