



Fawkham CE Primary School

Policy for Early Years Foundation Stage

May 2024

Fawkham CE Primary School

Policy for Early Years Foundation Stage

Church of England Vision for Education:

Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good.

John Chapter 10 Verse 10 – I came that you may have life; life in all its fullness

Our Fawkham Family helps everyone to:-

- Follow in the footsteps of God, with God's love, help and guidance,
- Know that we are all special and different and that God has created us in this unique way
- Feel safe, happy and confident in our loving caring Christian family
- Work together through the living out day by day of our Core Christian Values
- Try our best, with the light of Jesus inspiring us to be the best that we can be ensuring that we flourish

DREAM, BELIEVE, ACHIEVE AT FAWKHAM CEP SCHOOL

We value diversity and promote equal opportunities for all

Contents

- Early Years Foundation Stage
- Aims
- Learning and Development
- Planning
- Staffing and Organisation
- Assessment, Recording and Monitoring
- Learning through Play
- Liaison with Pre-school Settings and Induction
- Reception to Year 1 Transition
- Home/School Links
- Equal Opportunities
- Inclusion

Early Years Foundation Stage

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage', Department for Education 2021

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Fawkham CE Primary School we greatly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. However, we also believe early childhood is valid in itself, as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

The EYFS is for children from birth to five years of age. The final year of the EYFS is referred to as the reception year. At Fawkham we implement the new guidance set out in the “Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage” document (Department Education 2021).

All children begin school with a variety of experiences and learning. It is the privilege of the practitioners working in Reception to take on the task of building upon that prior learning and experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning, ensuring that parents/carers, support staff and the Reception teachers working effectively together to support children's learning and development.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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 and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement as well as celebration and rewards to encourage and develop a positive attitude to learning.

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

Enabling environments. We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observations we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.

Learning and development. The Foundation Unit is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The unit is set up in learning areas where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

Aims

It is every child's right to grow up in a safe environment, to be healthy, to enjoy and achieve, to make a positive contribution and to have economic well-being.

At Fawkham, the overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children achieve these five “Every Child Matters” outcomes.

We aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to his/her full potential. Each child is valued as an individual and teaching and learning is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates.

We aim to:

- provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of the child, including children with additional needs
- provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for future learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond
- provide opportunities for children to learn through planned, purposeful play in all areas of learning and development
- use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress
- enable choice and decision-making, fostering independence and self-confidence

- work in partnership with parents/carers and value their contributions
- ensure that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development

Learning and Development

The early learning goals (the knowledge, skills and understanding which young children should have acquired by the end of the reception year) and the educational programmes (the skills and processes which are required to be taught to young children) are set out in the 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' document (Department for Education 2021).

The three prime areas of learning and development are:

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

The four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied, are:

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

At Fawkham we believe these seven areas are equally important and depend on each other to support a rounded approach to child development. We aim to deliver all the areas through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

Achievement of these prime and specific areas is underpinned by the three characteristics of learning:

- Playing and exploring.
- Active learning.
- Creating and thinking critically.

Planning

Effective planning is the key to making children's learning successful, exciting, varied and progressive. Successful learning builds on and extends what children know and can do. Our planning shows how the principles of the EYFS will be put into practice and is always informed by observations we have made of the children, in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning. Development Matters and Birth to 5 are used as a guide to plan for opportunities to enable children to move their learning forward and make progress.

At Fawkham, we understand that children learn best when they are absorbed, interested and active. We understand that active learning involves other children, adults, objects, ideas, stimuli and events that aim to engage and involve children for sustained periods. We believe that Early Years education should be as practical as possible and therefore, we are proud that our EYFS setting has an underlying ethos of 'Learning through play. PLAY is essential for children's development across all areas. Play builds on children's confidence as they learn to explore, to relate to others around them and develop relationships, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play and by taking part in play which is guided by adults.'

At Fawkham, we plan our children's learning around broad overarching topics each term. Within these topics high quality texts are used to stimulate children's interests and introduce new concepts and ideas. The development of children's spoken language is at the heart of our curriculum and underpins all seven areas of learning and development. All children take part in many back and forth conversations each day. Adults introduce children to challenging vocabulary which is modelled to ensure successful language development. We ensure there's enough flexibility within our topics for children to follow their own interests and lead their learning.

We identify specific learning objectives, activities, differentiation, deployment of adults and resources, to meet the learning needs of the children on a weekly and day-to-day basis. Our timetable allows for flexibility to respond to individual children's needs and interests and to support individuals and small groups to address identified gaps in learning or development through regular keep up sessions or interventions with either class teacher or teaching assistants. This also includes activities to help children meet their provision plan targets.

Staffing and Organisation

There is one Reception class at Fawkham, with an expected maximum intake of fifteen children. The reception class may also consist of Year 1 children should the need arise. At the end of each year, a decision is made as to which children may find the transition and formalized learning of a year1/2 class difficult. These children then receive the year one curriculum in a mixed reception/year one class. The number of Year One children in Dormice Class will change year on year. There is usually at least one teaching assistant in the class throughout the school day.

The children have daily opportunities for structured and free-flow play both in the classroom and in the EYFS outdoor area. This time is supported by an adult, who acts as a facilitator to the child's learning. The teacher liaises with the teaching assistants, regularly involving them in planning, preparation and assessment. We are always aiming to improve our teaching skills, knowledge and understanding and so all practitioners are encouraged to participate in local authority courses, in-service and local cluster group training. Practitioners also conduct and attend in-house training and disseminate new initiatives, ideas and teaching methods to colleagues.

Assessment, recording and monitoring

At Fawkham we undertake assessment for learning. We analyse and review what we know about each child's development and learning, and then make informed decisions about the child's progress. This enables us to plan the next steps to meet their development and learning needs. All practitioners who interact with the child contribute to the assessment process.

Formative assessment

This type of assessment informs everyday planning and is based on on-going observational assessment of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles. Formative assessment may take the form of anecdotal observations, focused observations, baseline assessment, other focused assessments e.g. annotated examples of work, photographs, and information from parents. Each child has an online Learning Journal through the Seesaw website. This is where all observations, both photographic and written, are stored, and allows for consistent assessments to be made for each child. Class learning journeys are also compiled to provide a record of the class learning throughout the year. Photos, work samples and pupil voice are collated across each week to showcase the learning that has occurred.

Summative assessment

At the end of each short term children are assessed in each area of learning as to whether they are 'on

track' or 'not on track'. These judgements are made using teachers understanding of child development and what is expected to be achieved by children at each point in the reception year. Development Matters is used as an aid for making judgements but staff understand that children do not learn in a linear fashion and that rates of progress may be different yet still 'on track'. The teachers also undertakes in-house and local cluster group moderation. At the end of the academic year each child will be assessed against each of the 17 early learning goals and a professional judgement will be made as to whether the child has met the each ELG or not.

Teaching and learning in English and Mathematics is monitored by the English and Mathematics Subject Leaders, through lesson observations, pupil interviews and work sampling. The Reception class teachers analyses the termly data in conjunction with the headteacher.

At the beginning of the academic year the class teacher will spend time assessing the children and will complete the statutory baseline assessment as soon as possible after starting school. This will help inform the teacher of the learning and support children will need throughout the year, as well as represent a starting point with which to measure the progress of each child as they move on throughout the year.

Liaison with pre-school settings and induction

During Term 6 the reception class teachers undertake visits to the feeder nurseries, to meet the children who will be starting at Fawkham in September, play alongside them for a while, and talk about starting school. In addition to this, the reception class teachers and headteacher will meet with the prospective parents/carers for an informal talk about daily life in reception class and the curriculum, and to answer any questions that parents/carers may have.

Transfer records from pre- school settings inform the reception teachers about the new intake. Parents will also have the opportunity to sign up for a home visit in Term 6. The reception class teachers and the teaching assistant will visit the child and their family at home and will spend some time talking to both the children and the parents about topics such as, what the child enjoys doing, if the child has any worries about starting school.

Children start in September, attending full time and the first term is taken at a steady pace to enable the children to adjust to their new environment and routines.

Reception to Year 1 Transition

The reception teachers and Year 1 teacher have worked together to make the transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 as smooth as possible.

At Fawkham:

- Children are encouraged to develop independence when dressing and undressing and when organising their personal belongings throughout the reception year.
- Reception children meet the Year 1 teacher during assembly, playtime and other whole school activities during the reception year.
- Information regarding the individual EYFS Profile is passed on to the Year 1 teacher.
- An EYFS Profile end of year class summary is passed on to the Year 1 teacher.
- Reception and Year 1 teachers meet to discuss individual needs of children in July.
- Reception children visit their new Year 1 class and teacher for two afternoons in July.
- The 'Little Wandle Letters and Sounds' school synthetic phonics programme is continued throughout Years 1 and 2.

Home/School Links

We recognise that parents/carers are the child's first and most enduring educators. When parents/carers and practitioners work together in early years settings, the results have a positive impact on the child's development. A successful partnership needs to be a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise.

We aim to develop this by:

- Outlining the reception curriculum to parents/carers during the new parents meeting in July, to enable them to understand the value of supporting their child's learning at home.
- Newsletters are sent home each term to keep parents informed of their child's current curriculum and learning needs, along with weekly overview letters informing the parents of what is being taught each week.
- Organising a Phonics, Reading and Maths meeting at the beginning of the year.
- Operating an "open door" policy, whereby parents/carers can come and discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner.
- Sharing progress at school through the Seesaw online Learning Journal. Parents can read annotated observations, comment on any they want as well as upload their own observations of the children outside of school. Parents also have a home/school diary as a form of communication, used especially for reading.
- Encouraging relevant learning activities to be continued at home e.g. maths games and shared reading books, and ensuring that experiences at home are used to develop learning in school.
- Discussing individual targets with parents/carers at parents' evening in October and March.
- Providing an annual written report to parents/carers in July summarising the child's progress against the early learning goals.
- Holding child/parent 'stay and learn' sessions to enable parents to work alongside their children.

Equal Opportunities

At Fawkham we aim to provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life and work to ensure that every child is valued fully as an individual. Practitioners, as role models, are aware of the influence of adults in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical ideas. For further information see the 'Equal Opportunities' Policy.

Inclusion

Children with special educational needs will be given support as appropriate to enable them to benefit from the curriculum. This includes children that are more able, and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities.

Individual Provision Plans identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support, in line with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy. The reception class teachers would discuss these targets with the child and his/her parents/carers. Progress is monitored and reviewed every term. The school's SEN co-ordinator is responsible for providing additional information and advice to practitioners and parents, and for arranging external intervention and support where necessary. For further information see the 'Special Educational Needs' Policy.

Safeguarding

Please refer to 'Safeguarding Children' Policy.

Health and Safety

Please refer to the 'Health and Safety' Policy.

Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored and evaluated by the headteacher and Reception

class teacher.

This policy will be reviewed regularly and updates given to Governors, in line with any new information and guidance that becomes available.

Written by: Miss Payne (EYFS Leader and Class teacher) & Mrs Panesar (Class teacher)

To be reviewed: May 2026