

BRIZE NORTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Foundation Stage Policy

Philosophy

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. It is not just preparation for the next stage –it is vitally important in itself.

Introduction

The Early Years Policy of Brize Norton Primary School applies to all children who join the school at the beginning or during the academic year in which they are five. This year group is often known as Reception and will follow the Foundation Stage curriculum.

The Foundation Stage is part of the National Curriculum and prepares children for learning in Key Stage 1.

Children joining our school have already learnt a great deal. Family/Carers are their main educators and many have attended the Pre-School in our community. The early year's education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- It builds on what our children already know and can do;
- It ensures that all children are included and have access to the whole curriculum;
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children and activity that provides opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment.
- A good balance of adult directed and child initiated activities.

The Foundation Stage Curriculum

The curriculum of the Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing the six areas of learning:-

- **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 others.
- **Communication, language and literacy** - 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
- **Creative development** - the development of imagination and the ability to communicate and to express ideas and feelings in creative ways.

In each of the six areas there are stepping stones that show the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes that the children need to learn and the experiences met often enable the children to develop a number of competencies across several areas of learning. The Early Learning Goals form the final stepping stones. (Reference Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage)

The Early Learning Goals provide the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage.

Long term plans provide an overview for the academic year, ensuring all six areas of learning are given equal emphasis and that all aspects of learning within the six areas are covered.

Medium term plans written half termly focus on particular Early Learning Goals.

Short term plans written weekly include sequences of experiences and activities designed to promote new learning or consolidate or apply things just learnt.

These plans must be flexible, to take account of the interests and needs of the children and to capitalise on unplanned events, particularly those initiated by the children.

Approach to Learning

The general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are:-

- 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;
- A good balance between adult directed and child initiated activities;
- A 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;
- Carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage;
- Provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- Encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- Support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- Identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are regularly shared with parents;
- Good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;
- Clear aims for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do;
- Regular identification of training needs of all adults working within the Foundation Stage.

Play in the Foundation Stage

Children at this stage do not differentiate between work and play and well-planned play is a key way in which children learn with enjoyment and challenge. It is also important that children have the opportunity to initiate their own play on a regular basis. They need time to become engrossed, work in depth and complete activities.

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations. They are able to take risks and make mistakes.

Equal Opportunities (Inclusion)

Resources and learning experiences will be accessible to all children. In the Foundation Stage we give all children every opportunity to achieve their best by taking account of their range of life experiences and abilities when planning for their learning. Some children with

Special Educational Needs may be identified before entry to school through liaison with other agencies. Information is also exchanged through links with pre-school and parents.

Assessment, Record Keeping, Reporting

Regular assessment of children's learning is made and used to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of observation and discussion carried out by the teacher and other adults as appropriate.

The following assessments are also used:-

- Foundation Stage Profiles; to be the individual child's official record of achievement compiled using the information gained from the above assessments and observations. Once completed at the end of the academic year the Foundation Stage Profile results are sent to the LA for analysis and shared with the child's parents and next teacher.
- School Records; Regular checks are made on the progress of word and phonic recognition, basic mathematics, scissor skills and fine and gross motor skills.

After initial assessments have been made in the Autumn Term parent/teacher consultations are held. The child's strengths are discussed and future targets set. Parents are asked to provide observations of their children in the home setting. All assessment and observational information is used to ensure a personalised programme of learning for each child.

Staffing

- The Foundation Stage class will be staffed by a Qualified Teacher.
- The class teacher will use the support of a teaching assistant (NVQ level 3) to develop and extend children's ability.
- Parental involvement, in the classroom, is encouraged and written and/or verbal instructions given for each session.

Resources

A range of equipment is available for both indoors and outdoors, providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children. The materials and equipment used reflect both the community and the wider world and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.

Children's independence is encouraged through a well-organised environment where resources are easily accessible and stored suitably. The children are expected to take responsibility for their own belongings and the environment wherever possible.

All staff are constantly aware of issues concerning health and safety and resources are constantly monitored before, during and after use.

Home/School Liaison

It is recognised that all parents/carers have an important role to play in the education of their child. The Reception teacher will visit each child in their pre-school the term before they start school. A range of formal and informal activities are planned during the summer term. This is a time to complete any official business, learn more about the family and child and build a good relationship between school and home. Each parent will receive a school prospectus and a booklet about what their child will be doing at school and how to help them.

Parents are invited to an informal meeting, which is held early in May before the child starts school, to outline the curriculum and activities as well as school policies. Welcome packs are given at this meeting and uniform can be ordered.

Brize Norton Primary School operates an open door policy and in doing so parents are able to speak to the class teacher each day before and after school. For longer discussions that may be required, a meeting is always offered at a convenient time. Parents are also involved through the regular communication of the reading record and through parent observations.

A topic web, stating the learning areas for each half term, will be sent home at the beginning of a new term and displayed in the school and on the school website.

Regular newsletters are also sent home.

Activities are arranged throughout the year to encourage collaboration between child, parents and school. In the autumn term workshops are held each year on how reading, phonics and maths is taught in Foundation Stage. Open sessions are also planned in the spring term where parents are able to come and spend a morning in school following a class sharing assembly.

Admissions

Admissions are controlled by Oxfordshire County Council. Information can be found in our admissions policy.

Health and Safety

The school has a detailed health and safety policy which is followed within the Foundation Stage. All Foundation Stage staff hold a Paediatric First Aid qualification.

Safeguarding Children/Child Protection

Brize Norton Primary School recognises its responsibility for Safeguarding and Child Protection. The school has a comprehensive policy which all staff members adhere to.

Induction

During the summer term induction includes:

- Informal visit mornings and afternoons for parents and children together
- A parent information evening held in May
- Lunch invitations for parents and children
- Pre-school setting visits made by the Foundation Stage teacher
- An afternoon visit without parents
- A number of shared learning activities planned with our main feeder pre-school

The school day

All children must be accompanied to and from school by an adult. Children are only released at the end of the day to a relative/carer or known adult.

The children gradually attend assemblies as they become more accustomed to their new surroundings and after consideration of their appropriateness and length.

The children receive a piece of fruit/vegetable each day and can have free milk until their fifth birthday if they want. After a child's fifth birthday milk can be ordered online or over the telephone from Cool Milk (details provided by the school). Brize Norton Primary School is a 'Healthy School'. The school has a Whole School Food Policy which is available from the website.

Brize Norton Primary School is a Forest School. Each week the children in Foundation Stage visit a nearby woodland setting to undertake the learning in the six curriculum areas. The Foundation Stage teacher is a qualified Forest School Leader and drives the children to and

from site in a mini-bus, accompanied by at least two other adults. Parents are asked to provide appropriate clothing and footwear. A Forest School meeting for parents is held at the start of the autumn term.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy is monitored annually by the Foundation Stage Coordinator and the Governing Body.

Policy adopted: July 2010