

Purston Infant School
Foundation Stage Policy

Aim

At Purston Infant School we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential.

As outlined in the EYFS '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.'

The following documents should be read in conjunction with this policy: Admissions Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy, SEND Policy, Managing Medicines Policy and all other school related statutory policies.

We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings.

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
- **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**

Principles into practice

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support
- Work in partnership with parents and within the wider context
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated and child-initiated, supported by the adult

- Have a key person approach to develop close relationships with individual children
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment inside and outside

Foundation Stage Curriculum

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve and exceed the Early Learning Goals.

All the seven 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.

These three areas are the **Prime Areas**:

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

Children are also supported through the four **Specific Areas**, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The **Specific Areas** are:

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

At Purston 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
- **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)

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

As a team, we write long and medium term plans using the EYFS Development Matters based on a series of topics each of which offers experiences in all seven areas. These plans

then inform our short-term weekly planning, alongside our observations, which remains flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses.

Practitioners working with the youngest children in Lower Foundation Stage will focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the four specific areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively, and become ready for school. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as the children move through the Foundation Stage and grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

Children have whole group and small group times which increase as they progress through Foundation Stage with times for a daily phonics session using 'Letters and Sounds', teaching aspects of Mathematics and Literacy, including shared/guided reading and writing.

The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS.

'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities'

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. During children's play, early years practitioners interact and challenge children further.

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice.

We create a stimulating environment to encourage children to free-flow between inside and out.

Observation and Assessment

As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. We record our observations in a variety of ways. Everyone is encouraged to contribute and discussions take place. Significant observations of children's achievements are collated in their own personal learning journey, which are shared with parents. These on-going observations are used to inform the EYFS Profile/developmental matter bands. The child's progress is reviewed every half term and is regularly discussed with parents. In the Autumn Term and Spring Term, parents are invited to attend a parent consultation to discuss their child's progress. In the Summer Term individual reports are written and parents are given the opportunity to discuss the reports with their child's teacher. An individual summary of the EYFS profile is also discussed with parents.

Safety

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We have stringent policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious food, administering medication, following set procedures when children become ill, or have accidents.

Inclusion

We value all our children as individual, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace so that most of our children achieve the Early Learning Goals. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies.

Parents as Partners and the Wider context

We strive to create and maintain partnership with parents and carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways.

Working with other services and organisations is integral to our practice in order to meet the needs of our children. At times we may need to share information with other professionals to provide the best support possible.

We draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings/inviting members of the community into our setting.

Transition:

Transitions are carefully planned for and time given to ensure continuity of learning. At any transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings, including nurseries and childminders. In the final term in Upper Foundation Stage teachers and Key Stage One teachers liaise to discuss the individual children, their needs and analyse the assessment data to inform planning.

Into Nursery:

Children attend introductory sessions to Lower Foundation Stage to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners. They receive an 'All about me' booklet to complete and return. Children in Lower Foundation Stage enter the term after their 3rd birthday.

From Nursery to Reception:

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 visit their reception class in the summer term.

- Wherever possible teachers from the Upper Foundation Stage visit Lower Foundation Stage to allow children to become familiar with them.

In the summer term the Foundation Stage staff meet to share information. Upper Foundation Stage children start full time in the September following their 4th birthday.

From Reception Class to Key Stage 1:

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents, carers and staff 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 report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. 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. The children are also invited to visit their new class in the summer term.

This policy is a live document, being constantly updated. The Foundation Stage Co-ordinator is responsible for maintaining this policy.

Signed:

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