

EYFS Policy and Philosophy

At Flintham Primary School. All teaching staff deliver an EYFS curriculum through immersion in high quality teaching alongside an enriched environment.

When children arrive in our Foundation Unit they have already learnt a huge variety of things at home. Our aim throughout the Foundation Stage is to continue to extend this learning process by providing a happy, secure and stimulating environment in partnership with parents and carers who have already begun the learning journey.

Our philosophy is that children learn best when they are well motivated and having fun. It is through play that children begin to experience and learn about the world around them and how to cope with life's many excitements and challenges. We aim for children to become independent learners through the provision of motivating and exciting adult-led, adult-initiated, and child-initiated activities.

Intent

The intent for our children is to enter the next stage of their education ready to tackle new challenges with confidence and a positive mindset.

Early Years at Flintham Primary School

This document provides an overview of the policy, philosophy and practice in the EYFS at Flintham Primary School. It outlines our intentions in the EQYS and how we implement this within our provision.



"Young children learn from those they trust and with those who foster enthusiasm for learning."

Trevarthen, 2002

Intent

Our Aims in the EYFS at Flintham Primary School

To provide a **happy, caring, safe** and **secure** environment for learning which meets the individual needs and interests of the children

To develop **warm** and **secure** relationships between children and adults

To provide a **broad, balanced, progressive, relevant** and **creative** curriculum that is responsive to individual starting points and needs; providing **firm foundations** for future learning and development.

To innovate our children to take the lead in their own learning, encouraging **self-motivation, independence** and giving children the confidence to **explore** new ideas, **think** about problems, **take risks, make links** and **seek challenge**.

To develop high levels of **engagement, curiosity, collaboration** and **cooperation**.

Highly adept at managing their own behaviour in the classroom and in social situations.

To develop **resilience** and **perseverance** when things don't go as planned and who adapt as necessary to overcome any obstacles in their path.

To express themselves with **confidence** in a **meaningful** way. **Respecting** the opinions and values of themselves and others.

To foster **positive** home school links, working with parents as partners

To provide an **attractive, welcoming** and **stimulating** learning environment which will encourage children to **explore, investigate** and learn through **first-hand experience**

We want our children to enter the next stage of their education ready to tackle new challenges with confidence and a positive mindset.

At FPS, we believe the Early Years Foundation Stage is of the utmost importance to children and is the basis for long term well-being and lifelong learning. We feel a strong moral purpose to ensure our Early Years curriculum is inclusive and based on social justice and believe our practitioners directly shape children's futures.

This includes building cumulatively sufficient knowledge, including phonic skills, a wide vocabulary, British values and an understanding of healthy lifestyle. As well as this, we aim to develop Communication and Language, Physical Development, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design. We aim for all children to develop a passion for learning both inside and out of the classroom.



Implementation



Implementation

At Flintham Primary, provision is underpinned by a complementary relationship between adult led, adult-initiated and child led learning. We are ambitious in our approach using a continuous cycle of observation and assessment, planning/teaching, alongside structured and systematic lessons and guided group work.

"Knowledgeable practitioners appreciate that adult-led learning offers a child something different from, but complementary to, child led learning and it is one without the other that leads to an impoverished educational experience." Fisher, 2016.

Shared Input

Three times a day as a whole class covering the specific areas of literacy, math's and phonics objectives. Using the curriculum documents 'Development Matters' 2020, alongside Read, Write, Inc and White Rose and NCTEM Maths documents.

Adult-led focused groups

Short, focused groups are planned for writing, reading and maths and immediately follow a shared input. These sessions are planned with care, meeting the needs of all children, using prior knowledge of the child's learning experiences.



"The education of even a very small child does not aim at preparing him for school but for life."

Maria Montessori, 1967

Continuous Provision/Enabling Environments

"To continue the provision for learning in the absence of an adult." Alistair Bryce-Clegg, 2013

Indoors and outdoors resources are organised to develop children's skills in personal interaction and exploration and are linked to current assessment data. Resources are carefully selected to meet the development needs of the children in order to enhance potential for new learning and consolidate prior learning. Resources are dressed/displayed to reflect children's interests - discover, experiment and explore are key themes. Continuous provision transcends all areas of learning and provides children with the opportunity to demonstrate the three characteristics of effective learning. Children are given the freedom to make independent choices and are encouraged to be active learners and take control of their own learning.

Our EYFS Curriculum



The EYFS Curriculum at FPS

The following principles helped to shape the design of our curriculum to ensure it is bespoke to the needs of the EYFS pupils at Flintham Primary School:

A Knowledge Rich Curriculum

At FPS we want to ensure that our curriculum is not only tailored to our pupils' interests and needs but also ensures they are ready for life in the wider world. We have planned a carefully sequenced, knowledge-rich curriculum which aims to inspire children and promote excellent outcomes for all. We include '*powerful knowledge*' within our planning; knowledge that we believe will support the children in moving forwards and will provide firm foundations from which children can build conceptual understanding and skills over time.

Our knowledge rich curriculum places powerful knowledge at the heart of curriculum, has carefully chosen content, is organised in a coherent way, ensuring it builds from year to year. It is an entitlement for every child, regardless of background

Our curriculum is coherent and ensures that teaching does not jump from topic to topic, but enables children to develop knowledge, foster curiosity and ignite a love of learning.

We have focused our curriculum on what content should be taught, in what order, whilst reflecting upon what children remember and how they remember it. This allows children to make meaningful connections and gain an understanding of how our world is connected.

Topics will begin with an introduction to the knowledge banks.

A Vocabulary Rich Environment

We aim to provide a vocabulary rich environment, ensuring children are exposed to tier 1, 2 and 3 vocabulary. We have weekly vocabulary sessions called 'chatty words' which introduces the children to tier 2 vocabulary. Vocabulary mats, specific to the topic we are teaching, are used on a weekly basis and displayed in a child friendly format.

Here at Flintham Primary School, we recognise our predominant monoculture and strive to promote opportunities for cultural diversity both through the curriculum and wider school life. Stories, videos and visitors all help to encourage the children to become tolerant, respectful and caring individuals. This is reflected in our curriculum mapping and plans.

Promoting British Values

Everyday life at Flintham encourages our children to become responsible global citizens upholding British Values. Reception children take part in whole school assemblies, where British Values is a focus.

Eco-Friendly School

As a Green Flag Eco School, caring for our local and the global environment is reflected not only in our curriculum but is embedded in our pupils' attitudes and behaviours.



The EYFS Curriculum continued...



At FPS we follow the EYFS Early Years Framework (2020). Within this framework there are four guiding principles which shape our practice.

1. Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured.
2. Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
3. Children learn and develop well 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.
4. Children develop and learn at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

EYFS learning and development requirements

Our curriculum encompasses seven areas of learning and development. All areas of learning and development are important and interconnected. Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships, and thriving. These are called the prime areas:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social, and emotional development

Four areas help children to strengthen and apply the prime areas. These are called the specific areas:

- literacy
- mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design



'the best learning machines
in the universe' Alison
Gopnik

Throughout their time in Early Years and Reception, our children partake in an ambitious curriculum which is designed in a sequential way to ensure progress towards the end of reception goals. These goals are defined as Early Learning Goals (ELGs) The descriptors for these can be found in the appendix. As previously outlined our curriculum incorporates learning through play, learning by adults modelling, by observing each other and through guided learning and direct teaching. It is also important to highlight that our plans are flexible to allow us to respond quickly to children's new interests and/or needs.

'What children learn is important, but how children learn is even more important if they are to become learners in today's society.'
Helen Moylett How Children Learn, Nancy Stewart (2011)

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Playing and Exploring This area includes;

- Being willing to 'have a go'
- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know

During independent play, adults encourage children to initiate and seek out activities. They model a 'can do attitude' to the children and support children in taking risks when engaging in new experiences. We encourage children to show curiosity and to use their senses to explore the world around them. We set up open ended activities to ensure children have the opportunities to engage and put these learning strategies to use.

Active Learning This area includes;

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping on trying
- Enjoying achieving what they have set out to do

We ensure that children have the time to become involved in activities, whether it be adult or child led and allow them the time to concentrate and focus without distraction. Our EYFS children are introduced to 'Tough tortoise' as part of a whole school initiative to encourage perseverance and determination. One of his favourite sayings is 'I can't do it...yet!' Our aim is to support children in becoming resilient. The children are also introduced to our 'Sper Six Aims' which include respect, aspire, explore, determination, be responsible and make good choices.

When planning and guiding what children learn, we reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust our practice appropriately.

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning 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

The characteristics of effective learning underpin everything we do in the EYFS and are always a focus.

Creating and Thinking Critically

This area includes;

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things

Our enabling environment and guided teacher sessions, encourages children to find new ways to solve problems. Open ended resources in the learning environment help to develop this. We ensure that children make links and notice patterns in their experience. We also ensure that children have the opportunity to plan, make decisions about how to approach a task, solve a problem and reach a goal. We teach children how to check how well their activities are going and encourage them to change strategy as needed. We build in time to extend children's ideas through sustained discussion, considering 'how; and 'why' things happen.



Assessment

Summative Assessments

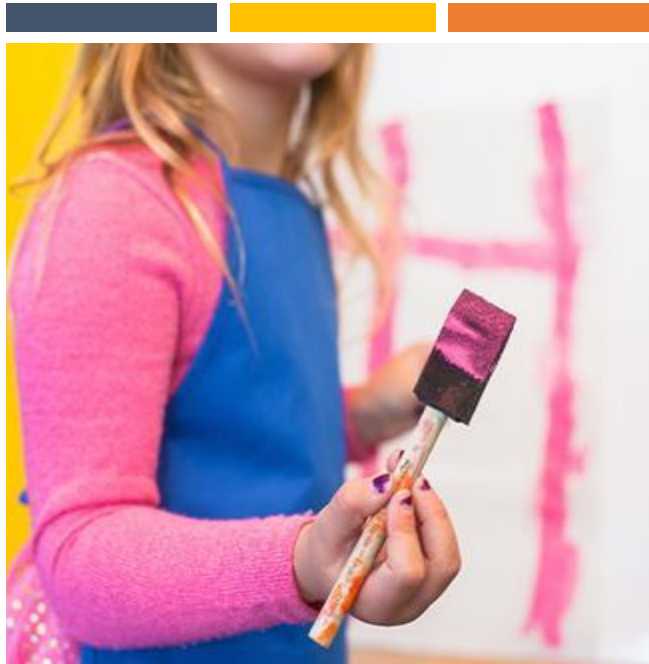
In addition to the continuous cycle of observation and formative assessment which informs the next steps for a child's learning, summative assessments are carried out for phonic development, number and an assessment of each child's stage of development for each of the 7 areas of learning. These take place termly and informs planning of subsequent teaching and learning.

Observation

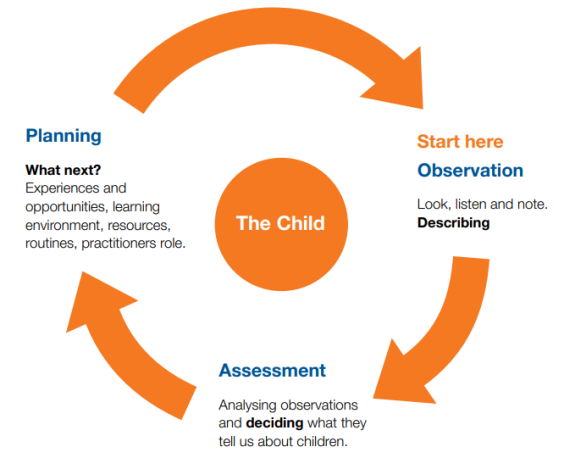
Throughout 'continuous provision' observation forms a fundamental aspect of the pedagogy of EYFS at FPS.

"Young children demonstrate language, mathematics, science, creativity, physicality - sometimes all within one activity - and the task of the practitioner is to make sense of what is seen, to recognise any significant steps in learning that may have taken place and to identify where help and support are needed to make further progress" Jan Dubiel, 2014

Observation and responding to children's thinking inform our planning of experiences and opportunities, how we create our environment for thinking, the strategies the adults use to extend learning (modelling, scaffolding, questioning, discussion, shared sustained thinking) and how we capitalise knowledge of children's interests to ensure high levels of engagement.



A continuous cycle of observation, assessment and planning is embedded throughout our EYFS provision.



Tapestry

Tapestry is used to record 'Wow!' moments - when a child does or says something that demonstrates progress or skill in a particular area. Parents also use tapestry to upload 'Wow' moments, ensuring that we gain a broad and balanced view of the child and their individual needs. Parent also send in WOW petals.

Parental Engagement



Text, images and videos can be uploaded by parents to share learning and experiences from home via PC, tablet or our mobile app - anywhere there's an online connection. Every entry helps to create a complete story of a child's time at school.

Throughout the year families are invited to 'Stay and Play' sessions in the EYFS classroom along with many whole school events e.g. Mother's Day afternoon tea, Mystery Reader and Christmas craft morning. We pride ourselves on building positive relationships with the families of FPS.

We create an environment that is conducive to interactions where all feelings can be taken into account. A warm welcome each day often leads to a deeper knowledge and understanding of each child and their family.

Parents are the first and most important influence on their child's development and future outcomes.

Children have two main educators in their lives - their parents and their teachers. Therefore, the school and the parents all have crucial roles to play. The impact on a child's education is greater if parents and schools work in partnership.

At FPW, parents are invited to be involved in every step of a child's journey in education. Beginning with a pre-starting school home visit, followed up with a transition evening and the invitation for their child to attend several 'transition' sessions before the Autumn term commences. We use an online learning journal, 'Tapestry' to record, track and celebrate progress made by each child.

Tapestry enhances this special time in a child's life and captures children's experiences as well as monitors development and learning.




We hold a transition evening in Summer term, and a phonics/reading/maths evening in the autumn and spring term to engage parents with supporting their child at home.

Our school website has a dedicated section to EYFS with all of our documentation available to parents along with helpful links and resources for home learning.

Parent's Evening

We hold a parents evening in the autumn and spring term to discuss with parents their child's development. At the end of the summer term, we send home a written report. Parents are also available to come and discuss their child's report with us if they have any questions or concerns.



"When it comes to what we have and where we have it, then nothing should be left to chance"
Alistair Bryce-Clegg, 2015

The Role of the adult

Research shows that progress will be significantly enhanced by the effective support and role models of adults within a high-quality learning environment.

Within our setting interactions between children and adults will look like this:

- Tuning in to what is happening or a child's thinking.
- Showing genuine interest.
- Respecting children's own decisions and choices.
- Inviting children to elaborate.
- Recapping on what has happened so far.
- Offering personal experience.
- Clarifying ideas.
- Reminding
- Using specific praise e.g. that is a good idea because...
- Offering an alternative viewpoint
- Speculating/ using 'I wonder if...'

Role of the adult continued....

The definition of teaching in the Early Years as stated by OFSTED (2015); Teaching should not be taken to imply a 'top down' or formal way of working. It is a broad term which covers the many ways in which adults help young children learn. It includes their interactions with children during planned and child-initiated play and activities:

communicating and modelling language, showing, explaining, demonstrating, exploring ideas, encouraging, questioning, recalling, providing a narrative for what they are doing, facilitating and setting challenges.



The Role of the Environment

The importance of each adult to support progression is crucial however, we equally understand that in times when a child is on their own independent learning journey the environment plays a significant role in development. At FPS each area of the classroom is informed by assessment. As the needs of the children change, as they grow and develop, so does their learning space. Using resources that are open ended encourage creativity, imagination and high order thinking skills. Outside role play is deconstructed with access to planks, crates and tyres. These resources can become anything and have unlimited potential. Our timetable allows for long uninterrupted periods of continuous provision that allow the children time to reach a deep level of involvement as they engage, play, investigate and talk.