

Queensgate Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



Date of Policy	Date approved by Governing Body
Spring 2019	Spring 2019

REVIEW SCHEDULE			
Date of next Review	Date reviewed by Governing Body	Change previous document (Y/N)	Date circulated (if changes)
Spring 2022	Spring 2022	Y (refs to new key docs from 2021)	Spring 2022

1. Key Requirements

“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, DfE 2021

The overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children stay safe, be healthy, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and achieve economic well-being by providing:

- quality and consistency, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- a secure foundation which creates learning and development opportunities that are planned around the interest and needs of the children, informed by regular assessments and reviews
- partnership working between practitioners, parents and carers
- equality of opportunity ensuring that there is no discrimination and every child is included and supported.

The guiding principles which shape our practice are grouped into four distinct but complementary themes:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

2. Curriculum at Queensgate Primary School

We recognise that every child is unique. We understand that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. We want our children to be independent and self-motivated learners, encouraging the children to adapt their work, think critically and take risks with their learning.

In Foundation Stage we follow the curriculum as outlined in Development Matters in the EYFS which is non-statutory guidance material that was created to support practitioners in implementing the statutory requirements of the EYFS.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1007446/6.753_4_DfE_Development_Matters_Report_and_illustrations_web_2_.pdf

The seven areas of learning

- Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and interconnected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children’s capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Characteristics of Effective Learning

- Through regular observations, we will discover children's interests and assess what children know. Also fundamental to our practice is to assess how children learn and it is our duty to report to parents their children's individual dispositions and attitudes to learning. This will be assessed using the Characteristics of Effective Learning which are:
- **Playing and exploring** – engagement
Children investigate and experience things and events around them and 'have a go'.
- **Active learning** – motivation
Children concentrate and keep trying if they experience difficulties, as well as enjoying what they achieve.
- **Creating and thinking critically** – thinking
Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between different experiences and develop strategies for doing things.

3. Planning

Through planning, teachers ensure that there is a balance of adult led and child initiated activities across the day. During child initiated activities the adults' role is to show an interest in the children's ideas, build conversation, facilitate and share ideas and model different skills. Such interaction with the children is essential as this helps to build the children's understanding and therefore guides new learning

4. Direct Teaching

At specific times in the day the children will take part in an activity that is teacher led. In Nursery and Reception these sessions include: Phonics lessons, Literacy lessons and Maths lessons, as well as teaching new skills to support children's learning within the classroom environment. All taught sessions are carefully planned and tailored for each class using previous assessments of the children's knowledge, skills and ability. Planning is changed and tailored regularly and, in response to the result of taught sessions, ensuring all teaching and learning is relevant and challenging for each child.

5. Learning Through Play – COOL (Choosing Our Own Learning) time

Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. It is our belief that children learn best from activities and experiences that they have initiated and play with peers is important for children's development. We carefully plan the environment both inside and outside and provide opportunities within these environments to reflect these interests to inspire them further, whilst also making sure that children have the opportunity to extend and practise the skills they have learned through direct teaching. Through play children explore and develop learning experiences, helping 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. Giving children the opportunity to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, allows them to discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. With adult support this process enhances children's ability to think critically and ask questions. Adults can support them in making connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning. The children can also choose whether to work inside or outside during their independent learning time.

6. Assessment, Recording and Reporting of Progress

Assessment is an essential and important part of the Early Years for children's learning and development. Assessment takes a variety of forms in order to gain an understanding of each child's level of understanding. These can be through observations, photographic evidence, examples of work and parental conversations. Assessment

occurs throughout any taught session, as well as during COOL times, when children are embedding and extending any previous learning. These assessments will then be used to shape and alter any future learning.

Observations are written at the discretion of the staff and may be recorded in the class assessment file or sent to parents via SeeSaw. These observations support the knowledge the staff in the Early Years have of the children through high quality daily interaction with them. Written Literacy work is kept in children's book in Reception, and in Nursery and Reception, independent mark making and writing is kept in children's individual folders.

On entry to the Foundation Stage a baseline assessment is carried out for each child and they are then assessed again at various points throughout the year. In Reception the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment is carried out with each child within their first six weeks at school. Phonics assessments are carried out every 6 – 8 weeks.

Information is shared with parents at Parents' Evenings and also informally by the class teacher where appropriate. An end of year report is shared with parents and at the end of the Reception the Foundation Stage Profile is shared, a summary of each child's attainment against the Early Learning Goals.

7. Special Educational Needs and Inclusion

At Queensgate we value the diversity of all children at our school. We believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. Assessments and teacher observations are used to identify children who may have specific needs within the first half term following admission. Results of assessments are used to ensure that a differentiated curriculum is offered to such children to meet their needs. For more information, we have a Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Policy.

8. Safeguarding and Children's Welfare

Children learn best when they are happy, safe and feel secure. We aim to ensure that all children feel happy, safe and secure through the continuous development of positive relationships between children and staff as well as relationships with their peers. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Guidance.

We aim to teach children that, in society as in a classroom, there is a need for boundaries, rules and limits which we all need to adhere to help us to stay safe. We aim to teach children to be consciously aware of their feelings and the feelings of others and how to manage their own behaviour by identifying behavioural issues and using them as a teaching moment. We also aim to teach our children to take risks whilst learning how to recognise and avoid hazards. Should accidents occur an emergency contact form is completed for all children on entry into school, which includes medical, personal and social details. Other than minor cuts and bruises, all accidents on school premises are recorded in the First Aid File and parents are informed.

9. Induction

Parents of children who are offered a place in the Foundation Stage are invited to an induction meeting in the summer term. Parents will be given information about their child's class, staff, uniform and general routines. All children (including those new to the school) will be invited to visit their new class before they start. Staff undertake home visits or visits to other Early Years settings prior to the child starting.

10. Partnership with Parents and Carers

The school recognises the importance of establishing effective relationships with parents/carers in ensuring the children achieve their full potential. Parental involvement is actively encouraged. Parents are kept regularly updated on their child's learning via SeeSaw and through Twitter. They are encouraged to add their own observations of their child via SeeSaw. Staff take the opportunity at the end of the day to talk to parents about significant achievements or any concerns. Throughout the year, parents are invited to attend workshops that help support their child's development at home, they are asked to attend stay and play sessions and class assemblies as and when they occur.

11. Equal Opportunities

Staff ensure that all children have equal access to the curriculum. They will be encouraged to respect similarities and differences within cultures other than their own. The school seeks to develop tolerance and concern for others.

12. Monitoring

The Early Years Leader is responsible for the monitoring of this policy. Areas for development will be incorporated into the School Development Plan as necessary.