



## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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# The Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage sets standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five. At Little Stoke Primary School, children entering the school in the Reception class will aim to complete the early years foundation stage within this year. As with all schools, we follow the Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage, laid out by the Department for Education.

## Aims

At Little Stoke Primary School we aim to secure a firm foundation of learning for all pupils, where children learn well and are happy, healthy and safe. Through achieving this, pupils will develop a broad range of skills, enabling them to confidently access future learning.

## Philosophy

It is our belief that a child's early experiences impact their future, in terms of how they approach new opportunities, their resilience and their self-esteem. At Little Stoke Primary, we therefore recognise the Reception year as an important phase of their learning, where children's previous learning experiences, as well as new opportunities, will link with their acquisition of key skills for the future. We believe that each child is an individual, with their own interests, experiences, needs and ways of learning. We also understand that the support, care and opportunities that children receive is essential to their development. This includes the people around them and the environment that is open to them. We firmly support the overarching principles of the framework for the early years foundation stage, which are:

- A unique child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling environment
- Learning and Development

## Principles in practise

### A unique child

#### ***Inclusion, Special Educational Needs, Progress***

All children and their families are valued at Little Stoke Primary School. As individuals, we understand that children will start their school life at Little Stoke with a wide and varied range of previous experiences, interests, and will already have strong relationships with people in their lives who care for them. Getting to know these things is the first step in enabling us to meet each child's individual learning needs. We will do this by:

- Making links with parents and adults within their previous setting to find out about each pupil, through induction meetings for parents, induction sessions for pupils, meetings with pre-school settings and home visits;
- Ensuring there are always enough adults within the setting to give care and attention to every child;
- Having an open door policy, throughout the year, where parents can talk to staff informally, making the classroom an open environment where parents and carers feel welcome;
- Providing a play-based curriculum with a wide range of opportunities for pupils to explore new skills through their own interests and the interests of others;
- Encouraging pupils to talk about their interests, share their ideas with others and show an interest in the opinions of others.

We are ambitious for each pupil, and we encourage children to achieve their personal best. We value motivation and praise pupils for showing this. Regular informal and formal assessments, taken from a range of perspectives are used

to monitor the progress of each child, and we will identify any potential special needs as early as possible. Concerns will always be discussed with parents at an early stage. Meeting the individual needs of pupils will be addressed by:

- Tailoring the curriculum to ensure each child's learning stage is being met;
- Providing a challenging curriculum that will ensure each pupil is working to their best ability;
- Having a reflective and flexible approach to planning opportunities for pupils to make best progress;
- Using interventions with a child that may need additional support to achieve in a particular area of learning, this may be individual or small group support;
- Closely monitoring progress in a specific area where a pupil may need support;
- Referring children to the SENDco when specific learning needs become apparent and involving outside agencies when needed;
- Working with parents to further support pupils at home.

## ***The learning journey***

Throughout the year we assess pupils to track their progress. We also want to broaden their interests through providing a wide range of opportunities and experiences, so that each child is able to increase their understanding of the world, find and develop new interests and learn from the people around them. We are keen for pupils to develop a reflective approach to their own learning. Each child has their own individual profile, in the format of an electronic journal, (Tapestry) which is started as they join the Reception class. Over the year, a range of adults, including parents, and pupils will record their achievements and experiences. Pupils are encouraged to look at their own journal and reflect on their achievements and what they have enjoyed. In addition, the learning journal is used to gather evidence of the learning and development of each child, and so is used as a tool to monitor and moderate progress and achievements with other settings.

## ***Welfare***

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand how they can support others. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. At Little Stoke Primary School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2012. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare of children.
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe, efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

## **Positive Relationships**

We believe that for pupils to be strong and independent they need to have confidence in the people around them. At Little Stoke Primary School we recognise that relationships built on trust and respect are vital to a child's achievements.

## ***Partnerships***

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators, and therefore recognise the role parents have played, and their future role, in educating their children. We also understand that relationships between parents and staff at the school play an important role in each child's future, including their being part of a school community. We commit to this through:

- Asking parents to complete an admissions and medical information form, and to inform us at any time if there are any changes to the information they have provided;
- Asking parents to sign any permission slips regarding their authorisation of taking photographs in school, use of the internet and any school excursions involving their child;
- Having an open-door policy that allows parents to feel welcomed into the classroom and which allows regular opportunities for parents to talk to members of staff about their child;
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents twice a year at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress mid-year, and at the end of each school year;
- Making parents /carers aware of the curriculum through a termly newsletter and curriculum sheet detailing what the children will be learning and tasks parents can do with their children to support this learning;
- Asking parents to contribute to the online Learning Journal. Training is provided for all parents on how to access this site. Parents without internet access at home will be able to come in to school on a regular basis and see the information stored in the online data base;
- Providing regular opportunities for parents to collaborate with their child and the school, in the form of open-class sessions and workshops, celebrations and performances;
- Asking parents to support their child by listening to them read and working with them on any other homework tasks;
- Encouraging parents to volunteer within the school community, for example listening to pupils read in school, supporting school excursions or other events.

## ***Equal opportunities, tolerance***

We consider the relationships between pupils to be of equal importance to their relationships with adults in the setting, and that as the children learn from each other, they develop respectful and caring relationships, where they understand differing opinions and interests, cultures and experiences. We believe in equal opportunities for all pupils. All members of the school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society. Pupils are offered opportunities to talk about their own life experiences, draw comparisons and ask questions. Pupils are encouraged to share their thoughts and learn about their community and the people in it.

## **Enabling Environment**

We recognise that an attractive, clean and stimulating space plays a vital role in the development of children's learning. An environment that reflects pupil interests, offers new experiences and provides opportunities for pupils to extend their learning, is essential to the early years classroom. We are advocates of play-based learning, as we believe this to be crucial to their development, allowing pupils to explore, consolidate, understand and create. Our early years environment reflects our belief that through play pupils will learn, develop independence and confidence, solve problems and learn about self-control and the need for rules. We want our pupils to be able to lead their own learning, using what they know and enjoy to learn and develop new skills. We believe that encouraging pupils to use their imagination will allow them to develop socially and emotionally, as well as increasing their language skills.

The environment plays a big part in developing skills across the entire early years curriculum. Regular observation and analysis of all areas of the environment take place, to ensure that each space provides the maximum opportunities to children.

We ensure that displays and play areas are changed regularly, and reflect current learning. Displays may be visual, tactile or auditory, and there will be a range of objects, materials and opportunities introduced to the children throughout the year. Some displays will celebrate learning while others will support children's independent learning – working walls. We know that some pupils prefer to be indoors when some prefer to be outdoors. It is our policy to ensure that whatever is offered indoors, there is an alternative equivalent available outdoors, so that pupils are able to access all areas of the curriculum wherever they are within the environment. Learning experiences are designed to be free-flow, so that pupils may use several areas of the space within their imaginative ideas.

We understand that how pupils access the resources they need and their ownership of the space is integral to how safe and comfortable they feel, and allows pupils to extend their learning independently. We also believe that with ownership comes responsibility, pride and confidence to self-challenge, without any barriers. We show our commitment to this by:

- Providing furnishings, fixtures and tools that are size and age appropriate, easy to access and of good quality. Regular audits will ensure that all furniture is safe and anything that is deemed unsafe will be removed and replaced, and the space will be updated to ensure a clean, fresh and modern feel;
- Stocking the environment with high quality materials and resources that pupils need to access throughout the day, and regularly replenishing these to prevent barriers to the flow of learning;
- Making all resources easy to access for the children, as a way of promoting independence and freedom within the environment;
- Providing a space for pupils to display their own work;
- Making sure that all those using the space, both indoors and outdoors, are responsible for ensuring it is tidied every day so that resources remain organised and pupils are able to find what they need.

## **Health and Safety**

At Little Stoke Primary School there are clear procedures for assessing risk (see whole school risk assessment policy) which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment. In the staff handbook, safeguarding and child protection policies, there is detailed information and procedures to ensure the safety of the children. In line with the EYFS statutory framework, a whole school medicines policy ensures that:

*There are systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medicines, and for keeping this information up-to-date. Training for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge. Medicines will not be administered unless they have been prescribed for a child by a doctor for x4 doses daily. Medicine (prescription and non prescription) will only be administered to a child where written permission has been obtained from the child's parent and/or carer. Written records are kept each time a medicine is administered to a child, and inform the child's parents and/or carers on the same day. (Statutory framework for EYFS 2014)*

- Fresh drinking water is available at all times
- Children's dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required
- A first aid box is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept.
- A health and safety policy and procedures which cover identifying, reporting and dealing with accidents, hazards and faulty equipment.
- A fire and emergency evacuation procedure and policy
- A safeguarding policy stating how mobile phones and cameras are to be used and stored securely whilst children are in the setting. Cameras that are used in school must not be used for staff own personal use.

## Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are “prime areas,” and four “specific areas.”

The prime areas are:

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

The specific areas are:

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

In addition to these areas of learning, are the Characteristics of Effective Learning, which develop pupil’s approach to learning as they develop. We believe these to be a powerful reflection on how to develop skills to be an active and inquisitive learner. These are:

- Playing and Exploring - children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’; “Children’s play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children’s development.”
- Active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; “Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.” Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.
- 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 2014) “When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.”

Throughout the year, it is our aim to deliver a curriculum where each of the seven areas of learning are taught promoting high standards of progress and achievement across the curriculum. The prime areas underpin pupil’s abilities to achieve well in the specific areas of learning, and so in the earlier stages of the year these take priority, though teaching of the specific areas also takes place. As the year progresses, the balance will shift to a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability in the prime areas. Throughout the year we ensure that pupils develop their Characteristics of Effective Learning, providing varied ways of delivering ideas and evaluating ways that pupils learn.

At Little Stoke Primary School: “Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is essential for children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. There is an ongoing judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners must respond to each child’s emerging needs and interests, guiding their

development through warm, positive interaction. As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1." (Statutory Framework for EYFS 2014) Staff at Little Stoke Primary School will use their experience and expertise, as well as keeping up to date with relevant research and training, to ensure that pupils are being delivered the best possible approaches to learning.

## ***Assessment and planning***

Through focused discussion and observation, pupil's knowledge and understanding of all areas of learning and their characteristics are assessed. All adults, including parents, who play a part in educating a child are encouraged to make these, through use of the learning journal. As photographs, videos and comments are recorded about each child, building up their profile, assessments are made. The class teacher will plan according to these assessments, judging next steps for each child. At any point where a pupil is not making progress in an area of learning, this will be discussed with parents, and if appropriate, the Special Educational Needs co-ordinator.

At regular points throughout the year, summative assessments will be made of groups of learners. This data will be analysed and used to move pupils forward with their learning, identifying areas that may need to be addressed in order to further progress. At the end of the year, a detailed action plan will be written that will reflect on assessments of the year and will inform planning both in Reception and in Year One for the following year.

## **Continuing success through the school**

### **Transition**

At Little Stoke Primary School we believe that a smooth transition from Reception to Year One is important for a child's next steps in their school life. Reception and Year One class teachers work closely together in Term 6 to begin this process. We prepare Reception pupils by:

- Providing opportunities where possible for the new class teacher to spend time observing and getting to know pupils within their existing environment;
- Having a 'meet the teacher' session where pupils formally meet their teacher, in their new classroom before the end of their Reception year;
- Having circle time to allow children time to ask questions about the year ahead;
- Altering the style of teaching and learning at times, in term six, to familiarise pupils with a more formal approach to learning.

At the end of Reception the class teacher assesses and creates a profile report on each child against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG) and comments on whether their development within each ELG is either 'emerging', 'expected' or 'exceeding'. This information is also communicated to parents and carers in the Reception child's end of year report and can be discussed before the end of the summer term.

The Year One class teacher will be involved in some moderation with the Reception class teacher and teachers from other settings to ensure that judgements are in line with other schools. The Year One and Reception class teachers at Little Stoke Primary School will work closely to discuss each pupil. The Year One teacher will be given a copy of each child's profile and comments on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

In the beginning on Year One, the class teacher will use what they know from their observations, and through discussions with the Reception class teacher to plan according to the needs of the children. In the first term a more play-based approach to learning will be in place as pupils adjust to their new curriculum.

## **Monitoring and review**

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teacher to follow the principles stated in this policy. She together with the Headteacher will monitor the performance of the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. There is also a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor will observe and discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners and provide annual feedback to the Staffing & Curriculum, raising any issues that require discussion. In addition the Headteacher will set appropriate targets for the pupils at the start of each year with the EYFS Lead and will report regularly to the Committee on progress being made towards them.

<b>Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS</b>	<b>Where can it be found on the school website</b> <a href="http://www.littlestokeys.co.uk">www.littlestokeys.co.uk</a>
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for children missing education	See child protection and safeguarding policy Children missing education policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy