



Foundation Stage Policy

Introduction

The Foundation Stage applies to children from three years to the end of reception year. At The Colleton children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. At the start of the Autumn term we admit children full-time but parents have the option to defer their place until later that year, or for their child to start part time. This is in line with Wokingham Borough Council's Policy.

Children joining our school have already learnt a great deal. Many have been to one of a range of settings that exists in our community.

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and stimulating environment where all children can reach their full potential. We have a responsibility to young children to provide a curriculum and environment that encourages them to flourish and become confident learners.

Our Aims

Our aims reflect the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) principles of:

A Unique Child

Positive Relationships

Enabling Environment

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1007446/6.7534_DfE_Development_Matters_Report_and_illustrations_web_2_.pdf

Objectives

- To ensure there is a wide and diverse experience in the Foundation Stage.
- Practitioners observe, guide and stimulate children so they can support and extend their learning.
- Children are encouraged to communicate and share ideas with each other and with the adults around them.
- For families and practitioners to work in partnership to fully support their child's development.
- To encourage children to express and explore thoughts, feelings and emotions in a secure environment.

Teaching and Learning

We teach the children through the Characteristics of Effective Learning:

- Playing and exploring.
- Active learning.
- Creating and thinking critically.

We use the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021).

There are seven areas of learning and development. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected – however, there are three prime areas that are particularly crucial for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning.

These three areas are:

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

The other four specific areas are:

- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the World**
- **Expressive arts and design**

Teaching and learning is provided through continuous provision, targeted adult focus activities in small groups, directed teaching of Phonics, Maths and key skills, and individualised teaching such as reading. As the year progresses we target specific areas of the curriculum including support groups for areas of development such as fine motor and speech and language skills.

The Learning Environment

We aim to provide a safe learning environment which stimulates and extends the natural curiosity and desire to learn both indoors and outside.

Play in the Foundation Stage

Through play children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, learn how to self-regulate and understand the need for rules. Play encourages children to form healthy relationships and deal with different social situations. They have the opportunity to think creatively and problem solve alongside others. They express their emotions in controlled and safe situations.

As adults it is our role to provide experiences and extend their learning through play. We do this by modelling, scaffolding their ideas and effective use of questioning.

Planning

We plan in collaboration with the children. We begin with the children's interests and ideas. We start with medium term planning of topics. Then the Foundation Stage team uses this to guide the planning of short term weekly/daily activities to target key skills and extend the children's learning. Our planning also focuses on key weekly skills e.g. phonics and identifies the intended learning outcomes and next steps. This may take into account children working towards the National Curriculum.

At all times our planning is flexible and adapts to the needs of the children and learning opportunities that may arise. E.g. snow!

Observation and Assessment

Observation and assessment are an integral part of the teaching and learning process in the Foundation Stage in which the role of the adult is crucial to ensure the success of the Observation, Assessment and Planning cycle.

Observation involves, looking, listening and noting accurately what a child does and says.

Assessment is carried out continually as the practitioners work alongside the children, taking note of skills and knowledge demonstrated. From these observations practitioners plan the children's next steps.

During the children's first half term in the Foundation team, the teacher assesses the children on entry skills and attitudes to make a Baseline assessment. We then use this information to plan for individual and group next steps. We monitor the children's progress throughout the year. At the end of the year we assess whether they have reached their Early Learning Goals.

Parents as partners

At The Colleton we recognise the importance of working alongside families during the education of their children. We believe that all parent/carers have an important role to play in the education of their child. Families are made to feel welcome and valued in their dealings with all staff.

We do this through:

- Home visits
- Induction mornings for children
- Induction meetings for new starters
- 'Stay and play' sessions
- Admission into school – we arrange for children to start school over the first two weeks of term. We stagger the starting time of each child so that the Foundation Stage staff can welcome and settle smaller groups of children.
- Participation in school activities
- Learning Drop In sessions
- Use of social media and online learning journeys

Transition to Key Stage 1

1. During their first year at school the children have planned opportunities to take part in activities with Younger Team (Key Stage 1)
2. The Foundation Stage children are allocated Year 2 'buddies' in preparation for transition.
3. Year 1 and Foundation Stage teachers review EYFS Learning Journals.

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