

# Featherstone Primary School

## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



Aspire, Believe, Succeed

**Governing Board approval date:** 13.12.21

**Monitoring, evaluation and review:** Every three years

### **EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS)**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Featherstone Primary School, children join the Reception class in the year that they turn five. In partnership with parents and carers we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life. We endeavour to ensure that children “learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe.” We aim to support children in their learning through “teaching and experiences that give children the broad range of skills that provide the right foundation for good progress through school and in life.”

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A unique child – developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals
- Positive relationships – supporting the children in becoming strong and independent
- Enabling environments – where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child
- Learning and developing – An acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates

### **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 why they exist. 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. (See Whole School Safeguarding Children Policy)

At Featherstone Primary School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage March 2021

We understand that we are required to;

- Consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and must use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development
- For children whose home language is not English, we will take reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning, supporting their language development at home. We will also ensure that children have

sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English language during the EYFS: ensuring children are ready to benefit from the opportunities available to them when they begin Year 1

- Provide play opportunities which are key to 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 staff members about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. Staff members must respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction
- Each child will be assigned a 'Key person'. The key person must help ensure that every child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs. The key person must seek to engage and support parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home.
- Provide a quality learning experience for children with a quality workforce. A well-qualified, skilled staff will strongly increase the potential of Featherstone to deliver the best possible outcomes for children.
- Assess all children against the Early Learning Goals at the end of their Reception year.

## **PARENTS AS PARTNERS**

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children.

- The children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during transfer sessions.
- We support children through the transition from Pre-School to Reception with the children attending part time during the first week. This is also to support staff and parents in getting to know each other as well as the children.
- We invite all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school and again during the first half term of the child's Reception year in order to detail how we aim to work with their child particularly in relation to reading and phonics.
- There is a formal meeting for parents twice a year at which the teacher and the parent/carer discuss the child's progress. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- We arrange a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between the child, school and parents: stay and play sessions, celebration assemblies, school visits, enterprise days and opportunities to share the children's themed learning.
- We will provide tweets on Twitter daily to celebrate our curriculum and provision.
- We can provide a quiet and confidential area where parents are able to discuss any concerns.
- We have an 'Open door' policy where Parents are able to talk with the EYFS staff both before and after school.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING IN EYFS

At Featherstone Primary School:

“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.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all Early Years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children’s ‘school readiness’ and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

The EYFS seeks to provide:

- Quality and consistency in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- A secure foundation through planning for the learning and development of each individual child and assessing and reviewing what they have learnt regularly
- Partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported” (Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage March 2021)

At Featherstone effective adults help children to learn by being skillful and thoughtful. Teaching is much broader and more subtle in EYFS, and it covers the many different ways in which adults help children to learn. The themes and commitments of the EYFS at Featherstone provide guidance across broad elements of pedagogy, including child development, working in partnership with parents, the importance of relationships, understanding the areas of learning, play, and establishing secure emotional and challenging physical environments.

Young children are not passive learners, they enjoy participating in ‘hands on’ and ‘brains-on’ activities. They actively drive their own learning and development, by the choices they make, the interests they develop, the questions they ask, the knowledge they seek, and their motivation to act more competently. Children’s choices and interests are the driving force for building knowledge, skills and understanding: by working and playing with other people, they are constantly learning about themselves and their social and cultural worlds. Children build positive identities through collaborative, caring relationships with other people, by managing and taking risks, ‘having a go’, experiencing success, developing resilience, and developing ‘mastery’ or ‘can-do’ attitudes. High-quality provision at Featherstone helps children to develop positive dispositions which lay the foundations for becoming lifelong successful learners.

## **ORGANISATION IN EYFS**

We have two classes of Reception children. Teaching staff will plan together to ensure equal opportunities and provision across the two classes. The children will share the enclosed outdoor space and there is a door connecting the two classrooms to enable free flow between rooms. The children are split to ensure a roughly even mix of ages and gender across the two classes. Twins are usually split; as this allows for each child to develop their own personalities and confidence in learning. A decision on this is made by the EYFS Leader and Head Teacher in consultation with parents.

## **THE ROLE OF THE PRACTITIONERS IN EYFS**

- To have a firm understanding of child development and an awareness of age appropriate needs behaviour and learning
- Be attuned to individualised feelings, needs, fascination and lines of enquiry
- Be attentive to any patterns of play that may be emerging or reflecting and emotional need
- Encourage children to communicate in a variety of ways and value home languages and cultural heritage
- Develop themed planning that is personalised, challenging but achievable
- Ensure quality interactions which scaffold and prompt thinking, building on children's interests, strengths and questions
- Encourage and support children's interactions with other children and adults
- Model feelings and Characteristics of Effective Learning
- Model language of learning and exploration of emotional well-being
- To be attentive to the 4 principles of Assessment for Learning: learning objectives, feedback, questioning and self-evaluation/challenge
- Support children to become mastery learners- to ask questions, take and evaluate risks, develop resilience and have ownership for their learning
- To ensure the environment is safe, calm, purposeful, challenging and supportive
- To provide inspiring learning experiences and provocations in which children can become the leaders both in the classroom and outdoors
- To teach through focus activities, being a play partner and through personalised learning opportunities
- To follow the school policy for behaviour management

It is our vision that all teaching and learning at Featherstone Primary School is to be at least good. To this end, any teaching graded as less than good will be re-observed within a one-week time period, followed by a second visit and then third through invite from the teacher.

## ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision.

- The daily routine is structured to include time for personal exploration, small and large group sessions and social experiences
- The routine ensures time for children to repeat, revisit and reflect on their previous experiences, which includes a long, uninterrupted 'explore time' during the afternoon which children can really be immersed in their own learning
- The routine is always consistent, thus ensuring children feel secure and are able to operate independently. Within the elements of the daily routine varied and enriching experiences are planned to maintain and stimulate children's attention and learning
- Children are emotionally contained in a small consistent group – their home base is supported with pictures displayed of their families or other significant people
- Boundaries are clear and consistent across the setting, with school rules and a school celebration board used for behaviour management (refer to whole-school Behaviour and Values Policy)
- Children have continual, free flow access to environments both inside and outside at all times
- Planning for the environment is informed by children's interests, their learning styles and preferred ways of communication
- Resources are easily accessible, plentiful, well maintained and organised and appropriate – with an emphasis on open ended exploration and collaborative learning
- The daily routines at Featherstone are adapted as the children progress within our setting. In September our routines are minimal and allow the children to form strong relationships with adults and children and to explore their new environment. Once the children are emotionally settled and begin formal learning structured focus groups and one to one can begin

## LEARNING DEVELOPMENT

Teachers and teaching assistants provide the curriculum in the Reception classes of up to a class size of 30 children.

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 the World and
- Expressive Arts and Design

Through careful assessments and observations, including information provided by parents and other settings, children's development levels are assessed. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. However, if a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. This may also include a discussion with the Inclusion Manager in order to access Special Educational Needs support.

Planning and guided children's activities will reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. At Featherstone 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; and
- **Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

(Taken from the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, March 2021)

## **DEVELOPING LEARNING POWER**

We believe that children can become confident lifelong learners if equipped with the appropriate skills, attitudes and capacities for learning from an early age. Children need to become resilient, resourceful, reflective and reciprocal learners. In order to develop these appropriate attitudes we:

- Enable children to initiate and carry out their own activities and make independent choices and decisions
- Encourage children to find, use and replace equipment and resources independently (in an organised, labelled and accessible learning environment)
- Encourage the children to make plans, modify plans, review and reflect on their own learning
- Set challenges for children and support them through the process of problem solving.
- Model and use the language of learning with both children and adults alike
- Use and encourage use of open ended and challenging questioning techniques
- Model 'being stuck' and learning from mistakes
- Using consistent strategies for what to do if you get stuck!

- Encourage collaboration
- Enable children to see each other as tools for learning as well as the teaching staff
- Developing noticing skills
- Encourage absorption, and an awareness of distractions
- Plan for varied imaginative play situations
- Encouraging children to make connections from their experiences and explore possibilities

This goes beyond the effective characteristics of learning identified in the EYFS.

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

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. We ensure that the curriculum reflects our cultural diversity and prepares pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

### **INCLUSION/SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEND)**

All children and their families are valued at Featherstone Primary School. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities.

Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with any potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with Parents/Carers at an early stage and the schools Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school's Inclusion policy for SEN.

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

At Featherstone Primary School, there are clear procedures for assessing risk (see whole school risk assessment policy and EYFS 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 addition to this, a daily risk assessment is conducted of the EYFS (see EYFS risk assessment) and in the staff handbook, safeguarding and child protection policies, there is detailed information and procedures to ensure the safety of the children. The EYFS risk assessment must be read in conjunction with other relevant whole school policies (see EYFS risk assessment)

In line with the EYFS statutory framework at Featherstone Primary School we undertake;

- A whole school medicines policy ensuring that there are systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medication are kept up to date. Training is provided for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge. Medicines (both prescription and non-

prescription) are only administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent/ carer. At Featherstone a written record is kept each time a medicine is administered to a child and the child's parents and/or carers are informed on the same day or as soon as reasonably practicable. (Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, March 2021)

- Fresh drinking water is available for children at all times
- Children's dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required
- Each classroom has a snack and sink area that can provide healthy snacks and drinks.
- A first aid box is accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept (see accident and injury policy). Teachers and Teaching assistants have a certificate in paediatric first aid
- An e-safety 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

### **TRANSITION FROM PRE-SCHOOL SETTINGS**

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 our EYFS setting
- Members of staff from Featherstone make visits to feeder settings. The number of visits will depend on the child's needs and how much information gathering is required in order to support the child's transition.
- Children requiring extra support will have additional visits regardless of their setting. Often these children will have been identified as requiring additional support or are part of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) process

### **TRANSITION FROM EYFS TO KEY STAGE 1 ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING**

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers 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 (ELGs). The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development, 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. We are committed to narrowing the gap, ensuring that no child underachieves.

In the final half term in EYFS the children will be encouraged to work more independently during focus groups. This will work towards preparing them for the independent learning they will

undertake daily in Year 1. The children who have not met expected standard for EYFS will be required to work towards their Early Learning Goals (ELGs) and may therefore need more practical experiences and play-based learning.

We believe that every child has the right to a well-planned and meaningful curriculum that will provide them with the tools needed to succeed throughout their lives, regardless of culture, social class, gender, physical and cognitive capabilities and beliefs. Regular monitoring and evaluation of children's progress enables us to continually adjust our provision in response to any areas of underachievement that may be identified.

We plan using the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (updated March 2021).

We respond to the development and learning of each child by planning a range of experiences which include the Prime and Specific areas of learning and the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

Diversity and inclusion are our priority and therefore we differentiate our planning and provision to ensure every child can access the learning experiences at their stage of development. No child is excluded from activities.

In EYFS we have themed medium-term planning which provides an overview for learning. These are covered across a number of weeks. The length of the theme is dependant upon the children's engagement and enjoyment. Whilst we follow a theme we also allow the children's interests to provide inspiration for activities to be accessed during continuous provision.

Continuous provision is planned on a daily basis within the setting to ensure that it is meeting the needs of the children and providing maximum impact upon independent learning.

## **ASSESSMENT TOOLS**

We use assessment tools to assess children's development and progress:

- Revised EYFS Development Matters statements for the Prime and Specific areas of learning
- Leuven's Levels of Involvement and Well Being

The revised EYFS Development Matters (2021) support us in being able to assess children's progress and identify next steps in their learning for the seven areas of learning and development. It also helps us to evaluate the provision, celebrate achievements and plan for improvements.

All of our teaching is based on our knowledge of the children's current learning, interests and developmental stage. This knowledge is gathered and continually updated through a variety of on-going assessments, which take the form of:

- Daily observations
- Independent evidence collection in personal folders

- Weekly focus group activities for Literacy and Numeracy (recorded in books)
- Video, photo documentation
- Work samples

## **THE RECEPTION BASELINE ASSESSMENT**

From September 2021, the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) must be completed for every child who starts Reception. This is a short (up to 20 minutes) assessment based on Language, Communication and Literacy and Maths. The RBA must be completed within the first 6 weeks of a child starting school. The data submitted to the Department for Education and used to track progress of the children from Reception up until they leave in Year Six. There is no 'pass' or 'fail' however a report is generated for each child on how they performed. This information is used by staff to support curriculum planning and opportunities through continuous provision.

## **INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITY**

Early years providers must report EYFS Profile results to local authorities, upon request. Local authorities are under a duty to return this data to the relevant Government department.

## **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy.

The named Governor responsible for the EYFS will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.

The EYFS leader and other members of Senior Management will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

At Featherstone Primary we recognise the need for the entire learning community to take responsibility for the application of this policy at varying levels.

- **Children** are expected to follow school rules and demonstrate positive learning behaviour
- **Parents/Guardians** have a fundamental role to play in supporting children in their learning.

As such, we endeavour to involve parents/guardians in their child's learning through such means as holding regular parents' evenings to report progress; sending termly and an annual written report detailing children's progress and hosting regular parents' workshops detailing how parents can support their child's learning.

It is our expectation that parents take advantage of these opportunities and we will endeavour to ensure that this occurs. Failure of parents to attend such occasions will result in further correspondence from the class teacher and if further action is necessary, parents/guardians will be

contacted by the HT or other Senior Leaders (AHT). Furthermore, in order for children to make the best progress we encourage parents/guardians, wherever possible, to:

- ensure that their child has the best attendance possible
- ensure that their child is properly equipped for school and the full-range of learning activities that take place within it
- inform school if there are issues or matters outside of school that are likely to affect their child's learning behaviour or physical/mental well-being at school
- promote a positive and supportive attitude towards school and learning in general
- fulfil the requirements set out in our Home School Agreement, supporting their child in applying the principles set out

**Teachers/Support Staff** are expected to follow the principles and guidance set out in this policy. We at Featherstone Primary School recognise that class teachers and support staff are fundamental to the progress that children make.

Through their purposeful planning, consistently 'good' teaching and thoughtful employment of effective behaviour management strategies, teaching staff endeavour to ensure all children make the best progress possible.

As detailed in teachers' performance management, teachers are accountable for standards attained by all the children they teach and they are expected to plan appropriate, measurable interventions where children are underachieving. Teachers are also expected to contribute to their own professional development, identifying individual areas of need and seeking opportunities to address these. Where teachers attend a course we sometimes expect the attendee to be able to disseminate this to others through Staff PDT (Professional Development and Training).

**The Senior Leadership Team/Governors** are responsible and accountable for overall standards in the school. Through carefully planned monitoring and evaluation procedures and the application of performance management procedures for all teachers and teaching support staff, the SLT endeavour to determine, monitor, review and support school policies and practice in teaching and learning. In particular they:

- support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively;
- ensure that school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning
- monitor and evaluate teaching and learning strategies in light of health and safety regulations
- monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning strategies in terms of raising pupil attainment
- ensure that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching
- monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning policy and practice through the self-evaluation process
- Support all staff with good CPD as part of growing and learning together