

# Earlsfield Primary School



## Foundation Stage Policy

Approved.....Date

Committee.....

Review.....Date



# Earlsfield Primary School

## Foundation Stage Policy

At Earlsfield School we believe that children learn best through first-hand experiences in a learning environment that demonstrates respect for all children and their families, by incorporating and welcoming all abilities, genders, races, cultures, religions, ethnic origins and social backgrounds. We recognise that each child is an individual who begins school with a variety of experiences and knowledge upon which the Foundation stage builds.

Earlsfield Foundation Stage Policy underpins the practice in all areas of provision and reflects the aims and principals of the setting. Parents and carers can refer to the Earlsfield School Handbook, website and our experienced staff for additional information and for policies which apply to the school at a whole.

### **Aims and Objectives**

The Early Years curriculum is broad, exciting and challenging and embraces the five outcomes set out in *Every Child Matters*:

- ✚ Stay safe
- ✚ Be healthy
- ✚ Enjoy and achieve
- ✚ Achieve economic well-being
- ✚ Make a positive contribution

We do this by:

- ✚ Providing a stimulating and challenging learning environment
- ✚ Reflecting our high expectations through encouraging independent learning and self-discipline.
- ✚ Establishing a mutually supportive partnership in which parents, carers, governors and staff share responsibility for the education of our children
- ✚ Promoting an awareness of, and respect for a diversity of cultures, values, beliefs and abilities
- ✚ Working together to create a caring community of learning where every child feels safe and valued.
- ✚ Activities that are exciting, purposeful and relevant for children to become independent, motivated and confident learners.
- ✚ Opportunity for children to be physically and mentally active whilst engaged in first-hand experiences.

### **Teaching and Learning**

We recognise that children learn best through:

- ✚ Child initiated play and playful supported activities
- ✚ An environment in which they feel safe and secure
- ✚ First-hand and multi-sensory experiences
- ✚ Actively exploring their immediate and local environment
- ✚ Investigational opportunities for critical thinking and problem solving
- ✚ Developing skills through a broad range of carefully tailored activities

- ✚ Building trusting relationships with adults and children
- ✚ Having their interests acknowledged, valued and extended.

## **The importance of Outdoor Play**

At Earlsfield School the children have constant access to the outside area.

Our outdoor area includes:

- ✚ Climbing opportunities
- ✚ Open spaces for movement
- ✚ Wheeled vehicles
- ✚ Small equipment to develop gross motor skills
- ✚ Story and imaginary areas
- ✚ A range of different plants, trees and textures to stimulate all senses
- ✚ Large scale construction and imaginary play
- ✚ Digging areas for exploring natural minerals
- ✚ Large planting areas to investigate growth and changes.

## **Our Planning and Assessment Philosophy**

Play based activities range between carefully planned and prepared opportunities to child initiated momentary experiences. Our staff are skilled in developing children's thinking to promote their learning, even if this requires adapting pre-planned activities. 'Playful' adult supported activities are devised to meet individual needs across all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. Children receive a balance between self-initiated, independent and adult supported activities tailored specifically for their own needs.

We use photographs, recounts of children's comments and examples of mark making, number work, models and other achievements to gain a full understanding of the children's interests, skills and knowledge. We use this information to ensure our planning and environment inspires and develops learning for all individuals. At the end of the reception year the assessment information is shared with Year 1 teachers and parents are given the files as evidence of their child's learning journey through the Early Years Foundation Stage. In addition to this, the nursery and reception teachers write an end of year report for each child, which is a celebration of their achievements and guide for the child's next steps.

## **The importance of Teamwork and the Role of the Adult**

At Earlsfield the organisation of staff time underpins the whole curriculum.

- ✚ In the nursery, there are two teachers and two nursery nurses.
- ✚ In reception there are two teachers and two teaching assistants.

All staff work closely together as a team. It is this framework and valuing of each team member as a professional that enables effective planning and evaluation of the teaching and learning that takes place. It provides the platform from which effective curriculum development and the raising of children's achievement can take place.

The class teacher has overall responsibility for monitoring the progress of each child in their class but the planning and resourcing is a joint responsibility for all team members. The organisation of the daily routine and the deployment of staff across the

phase reflects the ethos that each member of staff has a key role to play in developing learning for all children.

## **What is a Quality Early Years Curriculum?**

A Quality Early Years Curriculum should:

- ✚ Begin with children's interests and achievements
- ✚ Respect children as individuals with individual needs
- ✚ Acknowledge their previous experiences and home backgrounds and celebrate diversity.
- ✚ At all times promote and support Equal Opportunities, and be accessible to all children (see Equal Opportunities Policy)
- ✚ Have 'depth' and 'breadth' and meet the physical, intellectual, emotional, spiritual and social needs of all the children (as supported in the Early Learning Goals)
- ✚ Aim to develop autonomy within children in order for them to be able to organise their own times and be in control of their own learning.
- ✚ Give children an understanding of their place in the world and develop within them a sense of awe and wonder and a respect for living things.
- ✚ Promote a high level of self-esteem within children in order to encourage a sense of enquiry, the ability to hypothesise and the confidence to take risks with their learning.
- ✚ Promote partnership with parents, carers and the wider community in order to promote the attitudes necessary for lifelong learning.
- ✚ Be embedded in careful and purposeful planning and evaluation
- ✚ Be supported by rigorous assessment and record keeping.

## **Managing Transition**

### **1. Home to Nursery**

At Earlsfield we acknowledge that transition can be both an exciting and challenging time for children and parents and carers alike. We hope to provide a welcoming, happy and secure environment which minimises disruption as the child moves through the stage.

When the child starts nursery we ask the parent or carer to stay in the nursery until the child is settled and happy to be left. We operate a very flexible approach which centres around the needs of each individual child.

### **2. Nursery to Reception**

The Early Years Foundation Stage is organised in such a way to ensure that children in the Nursery are very familiar with the staff and environment across the stage. Before the child moves to Reception, specific times are arranged for the children to make 'special' visits to their new room. Meetings are held with parents and carers to discuss organisational and practical differences between the two 'stages' in the phase. When children arrive from other settings alternative individual arrangements are made.

After the first six weeks in their new 'class' parents and carers are invited to a meeting to discuss how their child has settled and to talk about joint strategies between home and school.

### **3. Reception to Year 1**

To make this transition as smooth as possible the child spends time with their new teacher in the foundation stage and in their new classroom before they move to Year 1.

### **4.**

We advise Year 1 staff to adopt similar routines, expectations and share ideas on providing activities that are playful and play-based yet still provide the challenge of developing learning beyond the Foundation Stage Curriculum. Reception staff and Year 1 staff meet to discuss each child's Foundation stage Profile, end of year report and any transitional issues that may arise.

### **Partnership with Parents**

At Earlsfield we firmly believe that children get the best out of their education when parents and carers and school staff work together. At Earlsfield we involve parents in their children's education in many ways:

- ✚ Informal meetings - a member of teaching staff is available for 15 minutes every morning and at the end of the day, to answer queries and arrange additional meetings if required
- ✚ Parents evenings
- ✚ Termly 'topic outline' to inform parents of planned medium-term curriculum to ensure that they are actively involved
- ✚ Parental help in classrooms, visits and to celebrate cultures and languages.
- ✚ End of year reports
- ✚ Christmas shows and class assemblies.

**Date of Policy:**

**Review Date:**