



Foundation Stage Policy

1 Introduction

The Foundation Stage extends from the age of three to the end of the Reception year. At Truro Learning Academy, children join our Foundation Stage Unit at the beginning of the academic year in which they are five (Reception)

NB: compulsory schooling does not begin until the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday.

The Foundation Stage operates as one reception class. The maximum number of places is:

Reception: 30 places.

2 Curriculum, Aims and Objectives

The curriculum of the Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by promoting and developing:

- personal, social and emotional well-being;
- positive attitudes and dispositions towards learning;
- social skills;
- thinking critically;
- attention skills and persistence;
- language and communication;
- reading and writing;
- mathematics – problem solving, reasoning and numeracy
- understanding of the world;
- physical development;
- creative development;
- Active learning.

Within our Foundation Stage, we aim to:

- * value each child as an individual and value each child's contribution and achievements
- * provide a safe, secure and happy environment, where children can develop positive attitudes towards learning and school.

- * develop independence, confidence and a positive self-image
- * enable children to make choices
- * encourage friendly co-operation and develop the ability to communicate with adults and peers.

3 Teaching and Learning style

The features of effective teaching and learning in our school are defined in our policy on teaching and learning. They apply to teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage just as much as they do to the teaching and learning in Key Stage 1.

The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents/carers that helps our children to feel secure at school, and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have on how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching;
- the range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children's play, talk or other means of communication;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests, and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning, with appropriate and accessible space, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors;
- the identification, through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents and carers;
- the good relationships between our school and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining our school;
- the clear aims of our work, and the regular monitoring of our work to evaluate and improve it;
- the regular identification of training needs for all adults working in the Foundation Stage

4 Characteristics of Effective Learning (CoEL)

In the EYFS **HOW** children learn is more crucial than what children learn. We focus on the **PROCESS** rather than the product as the way in which they engage with their environment and others underpins learning and progress. It is statutory that we report CoEL to parents

- 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
- Creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things
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5 Planning in the moment

At TLA we work in a way which allows us to respond to children’s individual learning needs and help them meet the next steps in their learning immediately, we call this ‘Planning in the Moment’.

Planning in the moment is all about seizing the moment for children to progress. Based on what the children are already deeply involved in, this way of planning relies on skilled practitioners using quality interactions to draw out the children’s knowledge and build on it there and then (in the moment). This means that the practitioner needs the skills to be able to see the **teachable moment** from the child’s perspective and be skilled enough to know when to intervene and when to stand back and observe.

Planning in the moment is all about capturing the moment of engagement and running with it to make sure the children progress. The child’s interest and enthusiasm is captured and exploited immediately to maximise learning and progress.

The teachable moment

National Strategies document states:

“It is in the moment of curiosity, puzzlement, effort or interest – the ‘teachable moment’ – that the skillful adult makes a difference.”

What does the child gain from the teachable moment?

The child should feel valued, important, interesting, capable, and able to learn as well as gaining knowledge, skills, attitude and understanding therefore making progress in one or several areas of the Early Years Curriculum.

What does the practitioner gain from the teachable moment?

They should feel valued, important, interesting, capable, and able to teach as well as gaining a sound understanding of the child's knowledge, skills, attitude, understanding and progress.

Ofsted

Jane Wotherspoon HMI (quoted in an Early Years Course by Anna Ephgrave 24.01.14) states

"Teaching... is all those different things that you do as an adult that help young children learn... communicating, modelling language, working with children as they initiate their own play and activities, being ready to intervene on the moment, demonstrating how to do something, explaining why something is as it is, showing children something, exploring ideas with them, encouraging them, questioning them, checking what it is they are understanding, helping them to record something that they did so that they get the structure and sequence of events, providing a narrative for what they are doing, facilitating what they are doing, setting challenges, all those sorts of things are the sorts of things we mean when we are teaching."
(Conference 9.10.13)

Planning in the moment means that Early Years practitioners should be doing all of these things, all day, every day.

Planning on paper

This way of working means that all written planning is retrospective (there is no forward planning). Each practitioner records what they have done to help the children progress each day on the iPad application Tapestry. Phonics is still taught daily using RWI weekly plans. When planning this way time is used at the end of each session (morning and afternoon) to give the children an opportunity to talk about what they have learnt and in most cases the teacher can use this as a whole class teaching opportunity or to consolidate knowledge. This is recorded daily by the teacher to ensure coverage of the EYFS statutory curriculum.

The Early Years Framework 2014 states:

"1.6. Practitioners must 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."

Planning in the moment fully allows this to happen and encourages the children to pursue their own interests.

The Learning Environment

This way of planning means that the learning environment (both the indoor environment and outdoor environment) constantly need to be reviewed and adapted to ensure that the children's level of involvement in their activity is constantly deep. The resources in each area also need to be plentiful and engaging. Each child has their own learning journey book which they can access at any time in order to reflect on and evaluate their own learning.

Observations

All observations made of the children must be based on quality interactions between children or children and practitioners. They must include any teaching that has taken place or progress that a child or group of children have made. All practitioners are responsible for highlighting learning and progress in observations. Emphasis is highly placed on using 'I wonder...' statements ie 'I wonder if...', 'I wonder what...', 'I wonder how...' We feel that this approach to questioning is a lot less pressurising and allows the children to open up more readily.

Focus Children

During the week each child will have quality interactions and learning experiences recorded on tapestry, this can be viewed on their Learning Journal online by professionals and parents.

Teachers identify areas for focus before-hand and afterwards identify future areas of focus. All members of staff contribute to these.

WOW Moments

Wow!" Moments are recorded too ... When children make a connection, do something new or consolidate their knowledge, practitioners will record this on Tapestry by taking or a photograph and making a note to add to the child's learning journey.

6 Assessment

Formative Assessment is ongoing and happening at all times. Practitioners assess:

- Individual children
- Whole class and groups

- Different 'sessions' in the day/week
- Areas of the classroom
- Areas of outdoor area
- Pieces of equipment

To ensure children always have opportunities to be highly involved and engaged so progress and connections are constantly being made for all groups of learners.

Summative Assessment happens at key points throughout the year. In September a baseline assessment is carried out.

The Foundation Stage Profile is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables

teachers to record their observations at the end of the Foundation Stage, and to summarise their pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals. It covers each of the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of observation, and this involves both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate. The collection of assessment data in the Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory requirement.

Parent's receive an end of year report on the Characteristics of Effective Learning and information on whether their child is Emerging, Expected or Exceeding the Early learning goals in each area of learning.

7 The role of parents and carers

We believe that all parents and carers have a key role to play in the education of their child. We therefore recognise the role that parents and carers have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- meeting individually with parents or carers about their child **before** they start our school;
- opportunities are given to the children to spend time with their teacher before starting school;
- inviting all parents and carers to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- offering parents and carers regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our school;
- encouraging parents and carers to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns;

- having flexible admission arrangements, and allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances;
- Arranging for children to gradually start school by attending morning sessions during the first week, then staying for lunch on the 2nd week and working towards a full day from the 3rd week. This allows children to familiarise themselves with the school routine, get to know each other so children feel safe, secure and ready to learn.
- encouraging parents and carers to stay if there are problems with the child's admission;
- offering a range of activities, throughout the year, that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents/carers;
- offering various activities that involve parents and carers, i.e. regular communication with home through curriculum booklets, and inviting parents and carers to curriculum evenings, in order to discuss the kind of work that the children are undertaking.

There is a formal meeting for parents and carers each term, at which the parents/carers discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. In July parents will have an exit meeting to discuss their child's level of development and to receive a report on their characteristics of effective learning.

8 Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored by the executive principle and senior leadership.

Signed:

Date: May 2016

Date of next review: