



POLICY DOCUMENT

For use by all member schools

Early Years Foundation Stage

	Name	Date
Written By	Clive Lees	Jan 2017
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Early Years Foundation Stage (“EYFS”) Policy

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfill 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.” Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (March 2017).

EYFS covers children who are in Nursery or Reception.

Each school within the Trust shall develop procedures for teaching EYFS in accordance with Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (March 2017).

In particular schools must comply with the Trust’s policies on Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions and Child Protection & Safeguarding. Schools must also prepare an EYFS Profile to comply with statutory reporting of Early Years Outcomes for each child by the 30 June.

Procedure for teaching EYFS

The following is provided as an example of a procedure within the Trust:-

Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is delivered in accordance with the government’s statutory document ‘The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage’ (March 2017). This document is a principled approach to Early Years education bringing together children’s welfare, learning and development requirements through four guiding principles.

The four overarching principles are:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

A Unique Child

‘Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.’

At the Spring Partnership Trust we recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of ‘differences’. All children at Spring Partnership Trust schools are treated fairly regardless of gender, race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our Trust.

In our schools we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children’s range of life experiences when planning for their learning. We ensure that all children have access to the curriculum and make progress commensurate with their developing abilities including able, gifted and talented, irrespective of their gender, ethnic, social or religious background or special educational needs.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children’s knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children’s learning needs;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;

- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

It is important to us that all children in the schools 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.

Welfare

'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 the Spring Partnership Trust we:

- promote the welfare of children.
- promote good health.
- 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
- maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.
- ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for the supervision of EYFS staff. This supervision will provide support, coaching and training for the practitioner and will promote the interests of children.

Positive Relationships

'Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.'

At the Spring Partnership Trust we aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents/Carers as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and /or carers, and we recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- the teacher and teaching assistant visiting all children in their home setting prior to their starting school;
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the summer term before their child starts school;
- parent workshops during the summer term before children start school and during the autumn term;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents each term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress and next steps for learning. The EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and skills;
- Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. We have good links with local pre-schools and visit or contact our main feeder pre-schools during the spring and summer term before children start school.

Enabling Environments

'Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.'

The Learning Environment

EYFS classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classrooms are set up in learning areas, where children are able to find equipment and resources independently. The EYFS classes have their own enclosed outdoor area. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. The children help to plan activities both inside and outdoors that help them to develop in all areas of learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

On-going assessment is at the heart of our practice at Spring Partnership Trust schools. We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. Observations will include planned and incidental observations and photographs. Baseline assessment is carried out during the first four weeks upon entering the setting. During the summer term the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. Each child's level of development is assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals and the report indicates whether the child has met **expected** levels, **exceeding** or **emerging** (has not yet reached expected levels). The report will also give a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three characteristics of learning (playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically)

Learning and Development

'Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates' 'All areas of Learning and Development are equally important and inter-connected.'

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in the other key stages. Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS;
- 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 indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our schools and the nurseries and pre-schools that our children experience prior to joining our schools;

The Characteristics of Effective Learning

Playing and Exploring (engagement)

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate, and staff can also enable children to explore and solve problems.

Active Learning (motivation)

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 satisfactions as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Thinking Critically (thinking)

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

The Areas of Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning and development that shape education in EYFS at Spring Partnership Trust schools. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The three prime areas are:

- Communication and Language, where staff support children to express their thoughts and use new words in order to develop a good vocabulary
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

The three prime areas are then strengthened and applied through the four specific areas.

The four specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

All the areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. The curriculum is delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. Children have whole class and small focus group activities which increase as they progress through EYFS. The curriculum is delivered through a play based approach both inside and outside.

Continuity

We endeavor to provide a broad and balanced curriculum that fosters the intellectual, emotional, physical, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our children. This alongside a timetabled period of transition should enable the children to make a seamless and unproblematic transition into Year 1. The Year One staff visit the children in their EYFS class during the summer term to get to know them. The EYFS staff and Year One staff meet during the summer term for a handover meeting. A copy of the Early Years Outcomes and Characteristics of Effective Learning will be passed to the Year One teachers. This should inform a dialogue between EYFS and Year One staff about each child's stage of development and learning needs and be used as a basis for planning during the Autumn term in Year 1.