

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



KEY FACTS:

The early-years education we offer our children at Polam is based on the following principles:

- it builds on what our children already know and can do;
- it ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- it offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- it provides a rich and stimulating environment

1. Introduction

In our school the Early Years are separated into two distinct stages, Nursery and Foundation. Nursery refers to two classes, Acorns from 1 year old and Saplings, 2-3 years old. Children are placed in classes according to their ages and social needs. Entry into our Foundation refers to two classes, Foundation 1 (3-4yrs) and Foundation 2 (4-5yrs - Reception).

The Nursery aims to be a 'home from home' where very young children can feel safe and secure whilst enjoying their first learning experiences in a social setting.

Foundation is important in its own right, and also in preparing children for later schooling. It is the Early Learning Goals that set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Foundation.

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2. Aims of Early Years Foundation Stage

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

- personal, social and emotional well-being
- positive attitudes and dispositions towards learning
- social skills
- attention skills and persistence
- language and communication
- independence
- reading and writing
- mathematics
- understanding of the world
- physical development
- creative expression

3. Teaching and learning style

3.1

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 Nursery and Foundation just as much as they do to the teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 and 2.

3.2

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

- the partnership between teachers, nursery nurses and parents that help our children to feel secure at school, and help them to develop a sense of well-being and achievement
- the understanding that teachers and nursery nurses have of how individual children develop and learn, and the understanding staff have that 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 carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the F2

- the provision of children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests, and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities
- the encouragement of 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
- the good relationships and transitions between the Nursery, Foundation and KS1
- contact with previous and future settings for our children so that transitions are made as easy as possible for our children
- the tracking and monitoring of children's progress through the use of Learning Journals which start in Nursery and continue through to the end of F2
- the regular identification of training needs for all adults working in Early Years

4. Play in Early Years Foundation Stage

4.1

Through play our children explore and develop the learning experiences that help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up their ideas, learn how to control themselves, and begin to understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively both alongside other children and on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express emotions, or re-live happy or anxious experiences, in controlled and safe situations.

5. Inclusion in Early Years Foundation Stage

5.1

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 we are planning for their learning (see our policy on inclusion).

5.2

We set realistic and challenging expectations taking into account the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the F2 (YR). Some children progress beyond this point. We help them do this by planning to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

5.3

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build on and extend the children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence
- planning with children's individual learning styles in mind
- using a variety of teaching strategies that are based on children's learning needs
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children, and to help them to learn effectively;
- offering a safe and supportive learning environment, in which the contribution of all children is valued;
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- employing resources that reflect diversity, and that avoid discrimination and stereotyping;

- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitoring children’s progress, providing support, seeking advice as necessary, and then liaising with external agencies as and when appropriate

6. The Early Years Curriculum

6.1

The curriculum for Nursery and Foundation reflects the areas of learning as set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Our children’s learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across all seven areas of learning.

6.2

Planning within Nursery and Foundation follows the needs of the children and is informed by careful observation of each child’s interests and stage of development. Challenging but achievable activities and experiences are planned weekly to extend children’s learning and allow for both child-initiated and adult-led experiences alongside our continuous provision.

6.3

The EYFS Development Matters provide the basis for planning throughout Nursery and Foundation. Our medium-term planning is completed termly in F1 & 2 and half-termly in Nursery.

- In Nursery adult led activities are planned weekly, with additional activities provided daily in response to children’s current interests.
- Weekly planning is undertaken in F1, with the addition of daily planning for adult led activities.
- Weekly planning is undertaken in F2, with the addition of daily planning for adult led tasks. The Early Learning Goals increasingly provide a basis for planning as the year progresses. By the end of the academic year in F2, children have daily mathematics and literacy sessions. Sessions are flexible at the start of the year, building slowly to more structured sessions over the year, in order to provide a smooth transition to Key Stage 1.

7. Assessment

7.1

In Nursery and Foundation regular assessments of children’s learning is mainly through observations, anecdotal, formal or photographic, which are collected and collated using an online programme – Interactive Learning Diary. These are recorded in each child’s **Learning Journal** and used as a basis for planning. Each child’s progress is monitored termly to ensure that they are developing skills and knowledge in each area of learning. In F2 children’s phonic knowledge and mathematical knowledge is assessed on a regular basis and this is added to the Learning Journals to complete the monitoring of children’s progress.

7.2

Each key person within Nursery and Foundation updates their children’s Learning Journals half termly. These progress books contain a wide range of evidence that we share with parents at each parental consultation meeting. Evidence of attainment is gathered through observations. These can be informal, anecdotal, formal (during adult led tasks), as well as photographic, video or voice notes. Pieces of child initiated writing, drawing, art work, computer work etc. are also gathered and used as evidence of attainment. Long, planned observations are carried out as part of this gathering of evidence. The child’s next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead. We share this information at parental consultation meetings. All journals are freely available to parents. Parents have access to all observations online through Interactive learning Diary Parent Portal.

7.3

In accordance with the recent changes to the EYFS each child in Nursery will have a written Two year old Progress Check in the Prime areas of personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language and Physical Development. This will be a written report produced during the child's second year that comments on each child's progress, highlighting the child's strengths and developmental needs. Parents will have an opportunity to discuss this with their child's key person.

7.4

Parents in Foundation 1 & 2 receive an annual report that offers brief comments on each child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs, and gives details of the child's general progress. Reports will be informed by the child's Learning Journal and offer brief comments on children's progress

in each area of learning, highlighting strengths and development needs, and giving details of general progress. These are completed in June, and sent to parents in early July each year.

7.5

The **Early Years Foundation Stage Profile** is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations at the end of the Foundation. There are 17 Early Learning Goals covering the seven areas of learning contained in the EYFS. Regular monitoring, through observation and assessment of children's learning is undertaken. This knowledge of children's attainment is then plotted against the Early Learning Goals on a half termly basis. We use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs for both the class as a whole, as well as individual

children's specific needs. Assessment in Foundation takes the form of observation. This involves both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate. There will also be some more specific assessment relating to areas such as Literacy and Mathematics. This will be shared with parents at regular termly consultation meetings.

8. The role of parents

8.1

We believe that parents are a child's first educator. We recognise the role that parents have already played in educating their child as well as their future role. We ensure that we use parents knowledge of their child and involve them in all areas of their child's learning and development through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school
- Getting to Know You booklet
- opportunities given to the children to spend time in their new class before starting school
- inviting parents of F1 and F2 to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher or key person if there are any concerns
- having flexible admission arrangements, and allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances
- encouraging parents to stay if there are problems with the child's admission
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- offering a range of activities, throughout the year, that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents
- providing various activities that involve parents, such as, regular communication with home through the child's school diary, inviting parents to curriculum evenings in order to discuss the kind of work that the children are undertaking, asking parents to come in to take part in activities such as cooking, craft days, storytelling, PE and swimming,
- Encouraging parents to contribute home observations that can be used in future planning for learning

8.2

There is a formal meeting for parents each term at which the parents discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher or key person. Parents of children in Saplings receive a written progress report just before their child's third birthday. Foundation 1 parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year, commenting on Prime Areas of learning. F2 parents receive a short interim report each term and a longer more detailed report at the end of the year.

9. Resources

9.1

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning.

10. Guidance on use of mobile devices in the EYFS

(see also Acceptable Use of Mobile devices and cameras Policy)

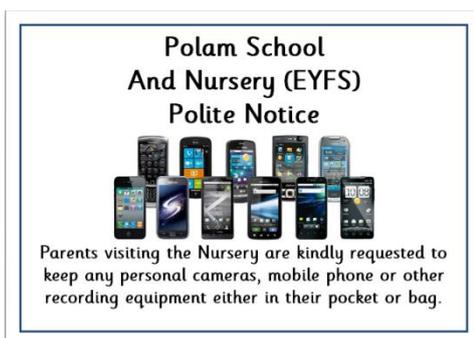
10.1

The following points apply to all staff and volunteers who teach in the Early Years Foundation Stage and relate to the use of all mobile devices to ensure the quality of supervision and care of the children, as well as the safeguarding of pupils, staff, parents and volunteers in the school.

- Personal mobiles phones/cameras/iPads (including for instant messaging, internet use or social networking services) **must not** be used or on display (switched off or silent mode) during the school day in any public area or the presence of children. They may be used in the staff room when staff are away from the children and are on a break.
- Staff must ensure their mobile devices have no inappropriate or illegal content stored on the device.
- Staff should not use their personal mobile devices to contact or photograph pupils or their families within or outside the school.
- Should any member of staff become aware of inappropriate or non-essential use of a mobile phone, this should be reported to a member of the SLT, and may be subject to disciplinary action.
- Staff should remind parents regularly of school policy with regard to mobile device use with the following statement, when announcing events, on programmes for events:

"You may photograph your child at this event providing the images are for personal use only (e.g. a family album). Please be aware these images (which may include other children) must not be shared on social networking sites or other web-based forums."

In and around all Early Years Classrooms, where children are collected directly from their classrooms the following polite poster is displayed



All volunteers and students who work within our school and the Early Years will be made aware of this policy and will adhere to the policy.

11. Monitoring and review

11.1

This policy will be reviewed in two years, or earlier if necessary.