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Foundation Phase Policy

Updated June 2016

**A statement of policy for Foundation Phase**

“Play is a child’s most serious minded activity” Vygotsky

**Introduction**

The Foundation Phase is a framework for children’s learning from 3 to 7 years. It encompasses all learning, building upon and extending previous learning experiences, knowledge and skills of the child. It recognises that young children learn most effectively when they are actively involved in first hand experiences that are fun and stimulating in both indoor and outdoor environments. This is fundamental to the Foundation Phase. Through experiential learning children will have opportunities to develop and extend their linguistic and communication skills, allowing them to make sense of the world, investigate, explore, problem solve and think creatively. Children learn best when they feel happy, safe and secure in their learning. This is achieved through the exploration of practical based activities, which gradually become more directed according to stage and ability.

**Aims**

* To make learning a positive and enjoyable experience in order to develop a life long love of learning.
* To develop children’s self-esteem and self-confidence to experiment, investigate, learn new things and form new relationships.
* To view every child as an individual and find out where they are on the learning continuum, where they need to go and how best to reach their full potential.
* To develop children’s personal, social, emotional, physical and intellectual well-being in order to develop the whole child.
* To improve the quality of children’s speaking and listening skills.
* To develop the children’s thinking skills to enable them to explore and make sense of their world.
* To develop children’s skills and understanding within the 7 areas of learning through purposeful and structured play in a safe, secure and stimulating environment both indoors and outdoors.
* To develop an appreciation and respect for their own and other cultures.

**The Foundation Phase Curriculum**

This underpins all learning by supporting, fostering, promoting, consolidating and developing children’s skills in the following areas of learning:

* Personal and Social Development, Well-being and Cultural Development
* Language, Literacy and Communication Skills
* Mathematical Development
* Welsh Language Development
* Knowledge and Understanding of the World
* Physical Development
* Creative Development

Also, Religious Education is a statutory requirement from the age of five.

**Literacy and Numeracy Frameworks**

The key aims of the LNF are to identify and provide opportunities for all learners to apply literacy and numeracy across the curriculum, and is broken down by year group.

Literacy – through oracy, reading and writing

Numeracy – through developing numerical reasoning, using number skills, measuring skills and data skills.

The following key skills will be developed across the areas of learning:

* Thinking – by using the processes of planning, developing and reflecting
* ICT – by creating, presenting, finding and developing information and ideas

**Curriculum Cymreig**

Curriculum Cymreig will be developed across all areas of learning by allowing the children to experience and understand the cultural identity unique to Wales. We will do this through St David’s Day celebrations, the Eisteddfod and our topic based studies will include a Welsh element to stories, visits, music, art, dance and cookery.

**Learning Strategies**

* Our learning environment encompasses both the indoors and the outdoors.
* The ‘Continuous Provision’ in every area is carefully planned for and the resources are easily accessible by the children and clearly labelled, enabling them to make decisions about what they need to complete a task.
* The ‘Continuous Provision’ is added to weekly to create enhanced learning opportunities that enrich and extend the children’s learning.
* The Continuous and Enhanced Provision gives the pupils time to explore and consolidate their learning and understanding, practise their skills and follow their own interests in a safe and non-threatening environment.

**Teaching Strategies**

* The practitioner is seen as the facilitator of learning with the child at the heart of the teaching and learning
* Practitioners lead and develop ideas; directly teach concepts, skills and knowledge; role model; play alongside; scaffold and intervene where appropriate and work as part of a team
* An emphasis is placed on observation as a tool for planning and assessing children’s needs to develop assessment **for** and **of** learning
* Focused tasks are planned for weekly to introduce new skills and concepts that we want children to be able to carry out independently.

**Organisation**

Activities with a focused teaching input are planned for early in the day when concentration spans are greater. Pupils’ reading and phonic ability is continually assessed and pupils are taught in ‘Read Write Inc’ groups across the Foundation Phase according to the stage (not age) they are at. After a focused literacy input the pupils are free to access the continuous and enhanced provision available in the following learning zones:

- Creative area (painting, chalking, malleable table, junk modelling, D.T work bench)

- Role play area (dressing up, acting out roles)

- Patio & sheltered areas (sand, water, water wall, large construction sites, Fred's Pond themed area,)

- Yard & field (wheeled toys, climb-in sandpit, concept boxes - train, adventure trail, woodland walk, storyteller’s cottage, log circle, mud kitchen, music wall)

- Classroom (writing table, number corner, book area, construction toys, ICT corner, investigation station, small world play & role play corner)

There are adults in each of the areas observing, facilitating, modelling, supporting, teaching and playing with the pupils as necessary. The children can also visit ‘The Café’ during this time where they can have fruit snack and milk.

After this child-initiated time focused Maths skills are taught using ‘Big Maths CLIC’ ideas and our concept booklets which are directly linked to NNF and FPO.

RWI & Maths lessons take place Monday to Thursday, leaving Friday free to pursue ’Big Writing’ and ‘Playing with Maths’ tasks & other outdoor activities such as Forest School.

In the afternoon topic based activities take place along with short focused handwriting in all classes and spelling practise sessions in Y1 & Y2. Whole school assemblies are held on Fridays and Foundation Phase assemblies Mondays & Thursdays while acts of worship are held Tuesday and Wednesday in class rooms. Our organisation ensures that over the course of the day there is a balance between teacher-led and child-initiated learning; direct skills based teaching and opportunities for pupils to practice and consolidate these skills in an area of their own choice.

**Planning**

We follow a thematic approach to learning. All three Foundation Phase classes study the same topic enabling us to share ideas, resources, plan together and allowing the activities in the different learning zones to be related to the topic. We also plan whole department trips, visitors and activities related to the topic.

***"Delve and Discover"*** days are held at the beginning of a topic to excite and inspire the pupils about their new project. Over night the FP classes and enhanced provision in all areas is transformed according the new topic and pupils are immersed in the topic for the day. Pupils are then give a list of the skills they need to learn and they themselves come up with the activities that they can do to cover these skills. This gives pupils a major input into the planning process – saying what they want to learn. The TASC process is also used to support the pupils finding out about a particular aspect of the topic.

We have a Foundation Phase department meeting every Friday where we monitor, evaluate and review activities, practices and procedures and plan the activities for the following week. Formal minutes are emailed to all staff and a copy kept in the staffroom file.

Class teams - Staff within classes meet regularly to evaluate the previous activities, discuss individual pupils including AEN & MAT pupils, observations and informal assessments and plan where to go next with their learning.

Planning formats are consistent and include focused tasks, enhanced provision and an overview of skills coverage.

Differentiation is built into the learning programmes with the stage of development each child is at carefully planned for. Extra support is given to pupils in literacy and numeracy where a pupil has been assessed as being less able or more able.

**Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

* Foundation Phase Profile
* Continuous assessments – observations (formal and informal)
* Pupil observation portfolios
* Formative assessments – RWI at least every half term or more frequently if requested by a group tutor, Big Maths CLIC & Total Recall tests, Alfie maths tests in Y2 (Sept & May), SWST in Y2 (Oct & May), National reading, numeracy and reasoning tests in Y2
* Pupil self-assessments and peer assessments according to success criteria
* End of Foundation Phase statutory teacher assessment
* LNF Tracker
* Parents evening in autumn and spring term and in summer term for those that request it
* Written report at the end of the year
* Open evening in summer term where parents can view learning and discuss written report
* Annual report to parents/ governors
* Assessment data communicated to parents and governors including school comparative information

At the end of the Foundation Phase our school will report on assessed outcomes for:

* Personal and Social Development, Well-being and Cultural Diversity
* Language, Literacy and Communication Skills
* Mathematical Development
* School comparative information for these 3 core Areas of Learning

**Assessment for Learning**

Assessment for learning is crucial to raising a pupil's achievement. It is based on the principle that learners will improve most if they understand the aim of their learning, where they are in relation to this aim, and how they can achieve the aim (or close the gap in their knowledge).

Throughout school we use a variety of strategies to develop the principles of questioning, feedback and peer and self assessment. The strategies are not exclusive to each year group but ensure that we build progressively adding to strategies used before. Many of the strategies are explained in WAG publication ‘How to develop thinking and assessment for learning in the classroom’ (Nov 2010)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Reception / Year 1 | Year 2 |
| Thumbs up  Self marking  Stars and a wish  Ongoing Feedback  Mini whiteboards  Closing the gap  Popcorn | Think, pair, share  Big Question  Talking partners  Exploring wrong Answers |

**Marking**

In Foundation Phase due to the age and ability of the pupils and practical nature of much of the learning the most important ‘marking’ is done verbally (work marked with a ‘v’ indicates verbal feedback has been given). It is done by pointing out to the child what they have done well and suggesting what they could do next to improve. Individual observations about their learning and progress in relation to the LNF and PSDWBCD are kept in their pupil profiles.

Written learning is always marked with the child present and verbal feedback given as close to its completion as possible. ‘Two stars and a wish’ is the main ‘marking’ strategy used at the end of a major piece of writing. Observations of achievement are put in the pupil profile folder. The ‘wish’ is the target they need to focus on. Pupils are reminded of this in the next lesson. Completed Maths concept booklets have observation achievement on the front with their next learning step.Additional strategies for marking include ticks and dots (dots for errors), welsh comments and pupil self assessment. In RWI - spelling tests, ‘editing the sentences’ and ‘hold a sentence’ activities are self assessed and marked with ‘a teacher’s pen’ by the pupil. The teacher will oversee this marking with a tick and the date.

Other learning is dated and a comment may be made by the teacher as to how the learning was completed e.g. ‘worked independently on task’; ‘needed help initially but soon grasped concept’; ‘worked with 1:1 support’.

Home learning tasks are presented and celebrated in a group or to the whole class and assessed via two stars and a wish (one star is for peer assessment; one star is for teacher assessment and the wish is for self assessment).

**Inclusion**

We believe it is important for all children to experience the range of Foundation Phase activities on offer. We will use every opportunity through play situations to challenge stereotypes, gender, race, culture, ethnicity, disability and ability.

Foundation Phase activities are designed to encourage maximum participation for **all** pupils in a context of learning alongside others and collaborating with them in shared learning experiences.

The variety of teaching and learning strategies adopted within the Foundation Phase curriculum aim to minimise **all** barriers to learning for **all** pupils.

**More Able Pupils**

We plan for identification of and support for more able pupils and to review this practice annually. We encourage all teaching staff to ensure opportunities are provided  for all pupils to fulfil their potential via challenging and stimulating environments where children are empowered to become independent learners, critically aware of their individual potential and progress, through continual reflection and review of targets.

**Talented Pupils**

We recognise pupils may have specific talents that are covered within FP areas of learning such as music, art, sport, ICT, drama. Equally pupils may have talents that include enhanced visual, spatial, mechanical, social, leadership skills and not directly covered by the curriculum. Parents are asked to fill questionnaires about their child so we can get a rounded picture of their strengths and weaknesses. We celebrate their achievements within and outside of school during assemblies, circle time and announcements in the weekly newsletter. We also challenge MAT pupils through a series of enrichment afternoons we run every term where pupils can choose to follow and develop a particular interest, talent or activity. Enrichment sessions on offer include football, multi-sports, cheerleading, gym stars, knit wits, fashion designers, world explorers, movie makers, roving reporters, nature ramblers, master chef, mad about science, creative kids, B.E.A.R club ( Be Enthusiastic About Reading), horrible historians, music makers & maths detectives.

**Handwriting and Presentation**

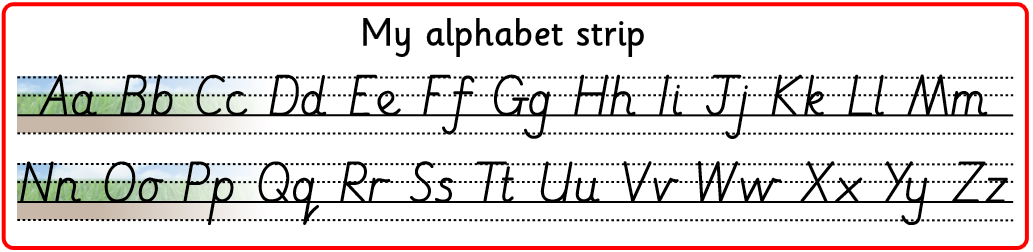
* Prior to pupils starting school in Reception, parents will be given a copy of our cursive handwriting script at the pre-school meeting and the need to encourage correct formations from an early age will be emphasised. At parent forums each year this will be reiterated. Playgroup will also be given a copy of our script
* Correct cursive letter formations will be taught to Reception pupils as part of the RWI sounds lesson using the RWI handwriting phrases as a basis (e.g. for "a" = "round the apple and down the leaf"). From Spring term in Reception, pupils will be taught the cursive formation we will amend this phrase to say "Get Ready" at the beginning and "and flick" at the end of the RWI phrase to make it a cursive formation instead.
* Formation of a letter will be practised for 2 minutes within a RWI lesson and will also be taught for in formal handwriting lessons in the afternoon
* Staff will ensure pupils are sat in perfect handwriting position and have correct pencil grip
* Pupils who are not ready for formal handwriting using pencil and paper will use scrimbling materials to make marks and practice large scale handwriting actions
* When pupils are ready they will be taught how to join letters together. This will be a natural and asy next step if they are forming letters correct in the cursive style. We will use the guidance in the RWI Get Writing handbook (p. 181-189 and extra info on CDRom)
* There are 2 basic joins – the ‘arm join’ and the ‘washing line join’ and then 3 variations:

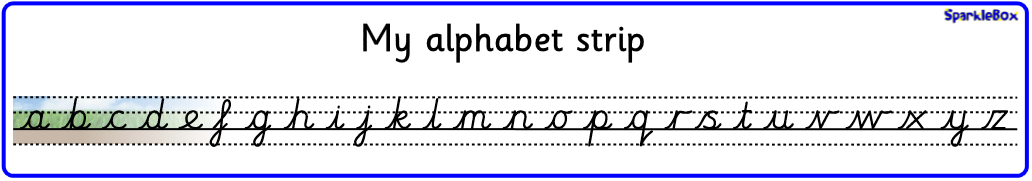
ai (arm to small letter) al (arm to tall letter) ad (arm to ‘sister’ letter)

wi (washing line to small letter) wh (washing line to tall letter) wa (washing line to small letter)

(The “sister” letters are c,o,a,d,g,q)

* When transferring their joined handwriting into their everyday writing we won't expect them to do it all the way through initially but just expect them to do it on the top few lines
* If a pupil reverses a letter or number during a writing task - they will be shown the correct formation and given opportunity to practise it at the end of the work
* We will encourage pupils to ensure letters are consistent in size with clear ascenders and descenders





* We will encourage pupils to present their work neatly, taking a pride in its presentation
* Staff will model how to set work out neatly and all staff handwriting in pupils' books and marking will be exemplary
* When pupils are able to, they will be encouraged to write the short date and title, underlined with a ruler neatly at the top of the work

**Home/ Community Links**

We recognise, appreciate and encourage support from home and the wider community in the following ways:

* Parent helpers – curriculum, trips, Forest School, Kerb Craft, weekly library visits, spelling journals
* Letters, topic webs, helping at home guides
* Curriculum evenings – RWI, Foundation Phase
* Parent forums
* Home Reading Log
* Home learning tasks e.g maths games, topic learning, phonic games
* Events – workshops, open mornings, concerts
* Visits
* Enterprise – stall at Christmas and Summer fetes
* Links with local churches and ministers
* Visitors – Mrs Tufty, PC Finnister, Kerb craft, topic related e.g. local vet
* Fields Association members
* Shirenewton Playgroup and other feeder playgroups and nurseries
* Outside agencies
* Cluster schools links
* Networks built up with other schools – PLCs
* Model school visitors

**Health and Safety**

The school agrees to abide by statutory health and safety guidelines as outlined by the LEA. Regular checks are undertaken to ensure compliance with legal requirements. H & S is discussed weekly in our F.P meetings.

The materials, tools and toys which the children play with are deemed safe and appropriate to their level of development. Appropriate risk assessments are completed and pupils are made aware of risks. The strictest food hygiene rules are adhered to during snack time and cooking activities and the café is the designated room for these activities to take place. Parents complete permission slips and list any allergy advice – these are located in the café.

**Policy**

This policy will be reviewed and updated annually.

Updated June 2012

Updated July 2013

Updated January 2014

Updated November 2014

Updated January 2015

Updated Sept 2016