



# **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

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## Intent

In the EYFS at Kineton Primary School, we are committed to building a strong foundation, ensuring children have high levels of well-being and involvement to help pupils to grow into confident, successful learners with the thirst to achieve their best. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. Our aim is to provide a happy, stimulating environment where every child feels empowered to achieve well and develop as an independent learner.

The curriculum will be based around the three key characteristics of effective teaching and learning in the early years outlined in the EYFS Statutory framework (March 2017).

- **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; and
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

### Our intent is to:

- Deliver a well planned curriculum that encourages pupils to develop creativity of thought and expression, whilst challenging themselves to strive for their best.
- Provide a curriculum that is broad and dynamic, building upon children's knowledge, skills, understanding and interests whilst teaching carefully sequenced knowledge and skills through well targeted, playful learning activities.
- Create a stimulating, nurturing environment that offers children opportunities to practise and develop their skills and knowledge. We use our love of outdoor learning to develop the important skills of communicating, negotiation and teamwork.
- Support children to build strong relationships with their peers and adults in their community so they communicate and work confidently with others. We value the engagement of our families as partners in their child's learning journey, working to build a positive two-way relationship.
- Enable pupils to grow into independent, curious learners who demonstrate the characteristics of effective teaching and learning, These are:
  - 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.

## Implementation

Each half term, EYFS staff introduce a new theme to inspire learning, whilst providing the flexibility for children to follow their own interests and ideas. Children learn through a balance of child-initiated play and skillful, playful teaching. Play enables children to develop concentration, practise and apply new learning, explore and experiment with new materials and ways of doing things, solve their own problems and become active participants in their learning. When playing and interacting with the children in their chosen activities, staff are able to assess children's current understanding, then model and demonstrate the behaviours, communication skills and vocabulary needed to enable them to make their next steps of progress. Our indoor and outdoor environments are valued equally as key vehicles for driving learning. We also recognise that some aspects of learning are best taught directly in order for children to acquire and use vital knowledge and skills ready for the next part of their learning journey in Key Stage 1. The timetable is carefully structured so that children have direct teaching during the day and opportunities to engage in extended periods of play, changing throughout the year to take into consideration the changing needs of the children. We provide high quality first teaching in phonics and reading through daily Read, Write Inc sessions. In addition, children are

taught vital maths skills in their daily maths lesson. Teaching is delivered in whole class, small group and individual sessions and is tailored to meet the children's needs.

### **English / Literacy**

Reading is at the heart of our curriculum and our aim is to encourage a love of reading right from the start. In EYFS, we have key texts each half term. The aim is to expose children to a range of books that not only develop a love of reading, but have been chosen specifically to develop their oracy, vocabulary and comprehension. These books will be embedded in our provision through activities, story sessions and on display for children to access independently. Through this, children begin to internalise new vocabulary, language patterns and to retell stories. There is cohesion and consistency with our approach, aligning with the whole school English process that is followed from Years 1-6:

- The inclusion of high-quality texts which are age and stage appropriate
- Regular modelled reading and writing opportunities during teaching activities and in provision.
- Structured comprehensions questions based on the VIPERs framework
- Dedicated phonics sessions, teaching common exception words
- A focus on developing neat, correctly formed letters through the Letter-join handwriting scheme

### **Phonics**

At Kineton, the teaching of phonics is a high priority. We follow the Read Write Inc (RWI) programme which is a systematic, synthetic approach to teaching phonics that ensures a consistent, rigorous approach to phonics teaching. RWI is an inclusive programme for all children learning to read. Children learn the 44 common sounds in the English language initially using a simple alphabetic code followed by a more complex code. Children quickly learn how to blend sounds using Fred Talk to read and spell words. Pictures and memorable phrases help the children's retention and recall of phonemes for reading and spelling.

Phonics assessments are carried out using RWI assessments every half term to quickly identify pupils that are not making expected progress or who are ready to move on. Our aim is for children to 'keep up' rather than 'catch up' where possible. All reading books progress cumulatively, matched to the sounds children are learning and already know. This structured approach begins as soon as children enter school and follows through until children have completed the programme successfully, usually by the end of KS1.

### **Mathematics**

In Reception, we follow the NCETM Number Sense program which aims to secure firm foundations in the development of good number sense for all children. Children have a daily Maths session to develop fluency, revisit key concepts and address misconceptions. The aim is that children will gain fluency in calculation and a confidence and flexibility with number. Attention is given to key knowledge and understanding needed in Reception classes, and progression through KS1 to support success in the future.

High quality learning environments and meaningful interactions with adults support children in developing mathematical thinking and discussion. Pupils learn through games and tasks using concrete manipulatives and pictorial structures and representations which are then rehearsed, applied and recorded within their own child-led exploration.

### **Wider Curriculum**

Our wider curriculum is taught through the learning areas; 'Understanding of the World' and 'Expressive Arts and Design.' EYFS staff have a good understanding of how ELGs feed into the National Curriculum through our robust planning and CPD opportunities. Colleagues throughout the school are also aware of the key ELGs that link to each foundation subject and the progression of the subject. Exciting, purposeful and contextual activities are planned to build on children's natural curiosity. For example, creating their own superhero cape enables children to think like a 'designer' and making traps for the troll like an 'engineer' as they explore a range of materials and test out their own ideas. Specific topic language is taught and modelled as appropriate to enhance understanding in foundation subjects.

Our inclusive approach means that all children learn together, but we have a range of additional intervention and support for children who may not be reaching their potential, or are showing a greater depth of understanding and need further challenge. This includes, for example, sessions for developing speech and language, social skills, fine motor skills, phonics, and mathematics.

### **The role of the adult**

At Kineton Primary school, each child will have a key worker who is their class teacher. We believe that it is vitally important for adults to support children's learning through purposeful play. Learning is personalised by building on the child's interests and involving them in reflecting on what they have learned and how they may build on their skills. Adults use a range of strategies to maintain the learning momentum including:

- Commenting
- Pondering
- Imagining
- Connecting
- Thinking out loud
- Talking about feelings
- Reflecting back to children
- Supporting the children to make choices and decisions
- Explain/informing
- Posing problems
- Staying quiet

These are as identified by Julie Fisher (2016) in her book 'Interacting or Interfering?'

In addition the adults will:

- Encourage independence
- Add resources that stimulate, motivate and engage the learner
- Demonstrate / model and work alongside
- Help children to learn to regulate their behaviour, to negotiate and to resolve conflict
- Observe and assess learning
- Record judgements and plan for next steps in learning
- Provide feedback to child/other adult/parents
- Ensure the environment is safe and secure and that the Welfare Requirements are in place

### **Impact**

Regular monitoring of teaching and learning by SLT and the EYFS leader ensures staff are continually reflecting on and improving their practice. The EYFS leader ensures staff receive CPD specific to Early Years to develop their practice, for example, CPD on effective interactions, the use of the outdoors and high quality teaching of phonics and maths skills.

### **Baseline**

Prior to children starting, staff spend time speaking to the child's parents, previous settings and read previous learning journeys. During the first half term in Reception all staff use ongoing assessments,

observations and conversations with the child to develop a baseline assessment. This identifies each individual's starting points in all areas so we can plan experiences to ensure progress. Some observations are uploaded using Tapestry and shared with the supporting parents and carers and examples kept in individual files. As required by the DfE, the RBA (Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment) is also undertaken. This assessment focuses on 'Language, Communication and Literacy,' and 'Mathematics.' The purpose of this is to show the progress children make from Reception until the end of KS2.

### **Assessment**

In our Reception classroom, practitioners constantly observe the children in order to find the 'teachable moments' within their play.

Written observations will note down significant moments of learning and will be based upon learning which the child demonstrates spontaneously, independently and consistently in a range of contexts and is not dependent on overt adult support.

### **Formative assessment**

Ongoing assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. In Early Years, practitioners constantly observe the children in order to know the children's level of achievement and interests, they then shape the teaching and learning experiences for each child reflecting that knowledge. Occasionally, written observations will note down significant moments of learning to share with parents and other professionals. These may be shared on Tapestry. However it is not expected that practitioners spend significant amounts of time away from the children in order to write observations.

### **Summative Assessment**

In summer term 2, the EYFSP is completed with the teacher judging whether the child has met each of the 17 ELGs. They will be assessed as either 'emerging' or 'expected.' Whilst there is no judgement to state if a child is exceeding beyond an ELG, teachers discuss outcomes with both parents and the year 1 teacher. Judgements are moderated both in school and externally with local schools.

Impact is also evident through children's successful transition into Year 1.

### **Transition**

In order to ensure the smoothest possible transition we have the following arrangements in place. Annual induction surveys of new parents show that the induction procedures are successful in settling our children quickly and happily into school, providing parents with the necessary support and information.

- Parents' Induction Session - In June we invite future parents to explain the entry arrangements, essential information such as uniform, school dinners and routines. We also give a brief overview of the curriculum.
- Introductory Visits – all pupils are offered several opportunities during the summer term to come and learn along side the current Year R class.
- Liaison with pre-school settings – reception teachers meet with practitioners before their entry into school and afterwards.
- Teddy Bears Picnic – towards the end of the summer term new pupils are invited to come and meet together as a class for the first time.
- Part-time induction – during the few days of school pupils attend on a part-time basis. Half the class will attend the morning sessions and half the afternoon. Both groups stay for a short lunch break.
- Curriculum Evening – after the children have begun school in September we hold a numeracy and literacy focused evening. This gives a hands on opportunity for parents to develop their understanding of how they can support their child's learning throughout the year.
- Parents are invited to join in with learning at several points in the year including phonics and maths sessions so they can see how children learn in the classroom

Transition into Key Stage 1 is also of key importance. We view this as a process rather than an event. During the summer term, Year 1 staff spend time getting to know the children through regular visits and story time and observe them in their environment. This is then used to plan provision that meets the needs of the pupils as they move into Year 1. A play based curriculum continues into the autumn term in Year 1.