

Early Years Foundation Stage at Finstall First School

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential."

(Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage, Sept 2021)

Rationale

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum at Finstall First School aims to develop the unique child, providing care and support in a safe environment so that every child's full potential is reached. Positive relationships ensure that children feel secure, whilst a rich and varied learning environment allows children to discover the world around them and provides opportunities for challenge whilst remaining safe.

Children require opportunities to develop independence and self-confidence in an environment where they feel valued, respected and cared for. Clear rules help each child feel safe, whilst high but realistic expectations encourage each child to strive to achieve their best. All children develop at different rates and learn in different ways. Therefore, well planned experiences in all areas of learning and development are essential, with purposeful play underpinning the delivery of the Early Years education.

A high-quality Early Years education lays the foundations for children, with a focus on developing the whole child and to ensure 'school readiness'. The EYFS provides children with a broad range of learning opportunities with the aim to embed firm foundations in the knowledge and skills needed for good future progress. A key priority of the EYFS is to maintain a determined approach to ensure that children learn to read fluently at an age appropriate level.

Curriculum Intent

- 1) To provide an ambitious, broad, balanced, relevant curriculum that meets the unique and varied needs of all of our pupils and enables all children to attain and achieve well in all areas of the EYFS curriculum.
- 2) To enable all children to read well as Reading is at the heart of learning.
- 3) To prepare children for life by developing children's character - helping them to become more independent, organised, confident and resilient; to be creative and able to solve problems; to be respectful, aware of differences, appreciative and reflective; to know how to keep themselves physically and mentally well and how to stay safe from a variety of risks.
- 4) To enable children to become good communicators; develop a range of new vocabulary and use it in a range of contexts, to encourage them to talk in full sentences in order to express their views and opinions.

Curriculum Implementation

1.) Thematic, topic-based approach to teaching and learning, relevant to all learners across all subjects. A robust baseline assessment, designed by the School with a high focus on Reading, Writing and Maths, is completed within 3 weeks of children starting School. As well as assessing children's early language development, social and physical skills. This helps us to ensure we have a good understanding of the whole child and what their next steps in learning are. Continuous provision (CP), reinforces adult led learning and provides access to the whole curriculum, and is planned, initially, for a half term. CP builds on previous knowledge and experiences, the children's interests and provides opportunities for re-capping to reinforce and embed knowledge and skills.

2) Staff are well aware of the importance of language development in EYFS and the teaching of language, communication and Reading has a high priority in our curriculum. Adult led synthetic phonics sessions are taught systematically twice / day, alongside handwriting, following the guidance in "Letters and Sounds. Staff listen to individual readers at least once / week, children have quality story time sessions with an adult, who focus on introducing new vocabulary and early language skills. Children make use of Reading Corners to look at books or listen to stories through headphones. There is also a listening area in the classroom so that children can listen to stories without pictures or props.

SAL interventions take high priority with staff trained in the Nuffield Early Language Intervention Programme.

3) Within EYFS, staff create a stimulating, purposeful and well-resourced environment for ambitious learning that matches our intent. The environment provided in each class and in the outside classroom gives the children access to rich, varied and imaginative experiences, which help them to make progress towards and beyond the ELGs.

Rocket jobs encourage children to independently access the activities in CP that are set up to reinforce and consolidate what has been taught in adult led sessions. To access and use the resources in the classroom independently. Snack time encourages children to organise themselves, to consider personal hygiene and understanding their body, knowing when to stop and rest, when they need to eat and drink.

4) Ensuring that the curriculum is enriched by purposeful, relevant additional activities that bring learning to life and are engaging, enjoyable and memorable for pupils e.g. Trips, events, productions, etc.

5) Curriculum is delivered by adults who develop strong, caring relationships with and between pupils, Staff model the use of new vocabulary and ask children a range of questions to understand their development of language, with high expectations on children answering in full sentences.

Impact

1) High quality Outcomes - children know more, remember more and can do more, as shown by:

- Our pupils' high level of performance when compared with other children using Early Learning goals.
- High quality outcomes in Reception.
- Our pupils become confident, independent learners when they leave Reception, ready for the next stage in their learning.
- Children are well prepared to face the challenges of Year 1, where they continue to do well.

2) Children develop detailed knowledge and skills across the seven areas of learning. Almost all pupils achieve the ELG for Reading and many exceed it. By the end of Reception, children use their knowledge of phonics to read accurately at a good level - many reading at a level more aligned with Year 1. Children become increasingly articulate, making good use of a developing vocabulary.

3) Children have improved social skills and learning characteristics - they are more confident, independent and resilient. Children have a very good understanding of rules, routines and structures, are very engaged in their learning and can sustain high levels of concentration. Children learn how to manage their own feelings and behaviours, especially when playing with other children during CP.