

# John of Gaunt Infant and Nursery School

## Foundation Stage Policy

*"The flowers of all our tomorrows are in the seeds of today"*  
*Chinese Proverb*

### 1 Introduction

1.1 The Foundation Stage applies to children from three years of age to the end of the reception year. This includes our Nursery and Reception classes. Please see Admissions Policy for details.

1.2 The early years education we offer our children is based on the four guiding principles of the EYFS:

- ❖ Every child is a unique child
- ❖ Children learn through positive relationships
- ❖ Children learn and develop well in enabling environments
- ❖ Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

We develop these through:

- building on what our children already know and can do
- being inclusive ensuring that no child is excluded or disadvantaged
- offering 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
- providing a rich and stimulating environment.

### 2 Aims of the Foundation Stage

2.1 The curriculum of the Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children in the

***Prime Areas of Learning:***

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

and the ***Specific Areas of Learning:***

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

### 3 Learning and Teaching style

3.1 Our policy on learning and teaching defines the features of effective learning and teaching in our school. These features apply to learning and teaching in the Foundation Stage just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 1.

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

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- The partnership between teachers and families, 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 planning and 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 achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage.
- 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 progress and next steps for children through observations.
- The good relationships between our school and the pre-school settings that our children experience prior to joining our school.
- The clear aims for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do.

### **4 Play in the Foundation Stage**

**4.1** 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, solve problems and extend their understanding.

### **5 Inclusion in the Foundation Stage**

**5.1** In our school 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.

**5.2** In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. Some children progress beyond this point. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of all children.

**5.3** 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.

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- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued.
- Using resources which reflect diversity.
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills.
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

### **6 The Foundation Stage curriculum**

**6.1** The curriculum for the Foundation Stage in our school reflects the areas of learning identified in the EYFS framework. The range of experiences that our children have the opportunity to engage in, enable them to develop a number of competencies, skills and concepts across several areas of learning.

**6.2** The EYFS framework provides the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. Our medium term planning is completed half-termly and identifies the intended learning, with outcomes, for children working towards the Early Learning Goals.

### **7 Assessment**

**7.1** We make regular assessments of children's learning, both in adult led and child initiated activities and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. We use these observations alongside photos and other evidence to create a learning journey for each child.

**7.2** During the children's first half-term in the Nursery class, the teacher assesses the ability of each child using the school's baseline assessment scheme. The children are regularly assessed in all seven areas of learning and these are recorded on a tracking sheet.

**7.3** In the reception class the teacher completes an assessment each term, recording each child's progress across the seven areas of development and learning, this includes an initial assessment of each child during their first half term in Reception. At the end of the year, the teacher completes the EYFS Profile Assessment for each child, which is shared with parents and with the child's next teacher to assist with planning for the year ahead.

**7.4** Parents 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.

### **8 The role of families**

**8.1** We believe that all families have an important role to play in the education of their child. We recognise the role that families have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

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- The teacher visits and talks to parents/carers about their child before their child starts in our nursery.
- The children and their parents/carers have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting nursery.
- Inviting all parents/carers to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.
- Offering parents/carers regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress.
- Encouraging parents/carers to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents during the autumn and spring terms at which the teacher and the parent/carer can discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. There is an open evening in the summer term where all children's work is celebrated. Parents/carers receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- Having flexible admission arrangements that enable children and parents/carers to become secure, and by allowing time to discuss each child's circumstances;
- Offering a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and families.
- Providing regular tasks for parents to complete with their children in their school diaries.
- Parents have regular opportunities to look at their child's Learning Journeys and to contribute to them.
- There is regular communication with home through the child's home school diary, newsletters, Family Learning days, notice boards etc.
- Each week the school updates the Virtual Learning Environment class pages with an update and photographs of what the children have been learning.

### 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.

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