

Aims for the Foundation Stage

Children learn effectively when they are engaged in purposeful play, when they are self-motivated and when they think critically and make links between ideas. They need a well-planned and resourced curriculum to take their learning forward and to provide opportunities for all children to succeed in an atmosphere of care and of feeling valued.



Children's first experiences of the Early Years Foundation Stage should underpin all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing the child's progress in three prime areas

- **Personal, social and emotional development, developing:**

Social skills (ability to make relationships) in particular by providing opportunities that enable children to learn how to cooperate and play harmoniously alongside and with each other, to listen to each other and to form positive relationships with their peers.

Self-confidence and self-awareness by encouraging independence, confidence to try new activities, confidence to share their ideas and opinions and to ask for help when needed.

Ability to manage their feelings and behaviour by encouraging children to discuss their own and others' feelings and by recognising that some behaviour is unacceptable. Children should also be encouraged to work as part of a group or class, to understand and follow the rules, and to adjust their behaviour to different situations.

- **Communication and Language in particular:**

Listening and attention: with opportunities for all children to listen attentively in a range of situations and respond appropriately, to listen to stories, anticipate key events and make comments, ask questions or respond with actions.

Understanding: developing a wide vocabulary, being encouraged to follow instructions, explore ideas and to ask and answer questions about their own experiences, stories and events.

Speaking: developing the ability to express themselves effectively in different situations and to develop narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events.

- **Physical development:**

children should be offered plenty of opportunities to develop and practice their fine and gross motor skills and to handle tools and equipment safely, including writing equipment. They should also be helped to increase their understanding of how their bodies work and what they need to do to be healthy and safe and how to manage their own basic hygiene needs.

Four specific areas of skills and knowledge will be introduced to children at the appropriate level according to their stage of development:

- **Literacy:** children should have lots of varied opportunities to explore, enjoy, and learn about words, sounds and text in a broad range of contexts and to experience a rich variety of books. Children should be introduced to early reading and writing skills.

- **Mathematics:** children should have access to a wide range of practical activities designed to develop their understanding of number, measurement, pattern, shape and space by providing a broad range of contexts in which they can explore, enjoy, learn, practise and talk about them
- **Understanding the world:** children should be given opportunities to solve problems, make decisions, experiment, predict, plan and question in a variety of contexts, to explore and find out about their environment and people and communities that have significance in their lives and to recognise and use technology to enhance their learning.
- **Expressive arts and design:** children should have access to a wide range of planned and spontaneous activities to help them explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of art, design and technology, music, movement, dance and imaginative and role play activities.

Prime Areas Of Development - Personal, Social and Emotional Development

A Unique Child

Successful personal, social and emotional development is critical for very young children in all aspects of their lives and gives them the best opportunity for success in all other areas of learning. It is crucial that we provide the experiences and support to enable children to develop a positive self-image.

Positive Relationships

We will aim to give particular attention to:

- Establishing constructive relationships with children, with other adults and with workers from other agencies, respecting the different needs of children and adjusting expectations accordingly
- Finding opportunities to give positive encouragement to children, with adults acting as positive role-models
- Ensuring that there is time and space for children to focus on activities and experiences and develop their own interests
- Providing positive images in, for example, books and displays that challenge children's thinking and help them embrace differences in gender, ethnicity, religion, special educational needs and disabilities.
- Providing support and a structured approach to achieve the successful social and emotional development of vulnerable children and those with particular behavioural or communication difficulties.

Enabling Environments

We aim to provide an environment where children can develop independence, confidence and where they can learn to manage their feelings and behaviour appropriately. We will encourage children to develop a positive self-image, make friends and learn to work as part of a group by:

- Planning opportunities for children to work alone and in small and large groups
- Planning activities and experiences that challenge children but are achievable
- Planning activities that promote emotional, moral, spiritual and social development alongside intellectual development
- Planning experiences that help children develop autonomy and a positive attitude towards learning.
- Planning for the development of independence skills, particularly for children who are highly dependent on adult support
- Providing opportunities for play and learning that acknowledge children's religious beliefs and cultural backgrounds

Prime Areas Of Development - Communication and language

Communication and language are essential skills to master in the Early Years as language is the medium in which we communicate, learn, think and share ideas. Children must be provided with the opportunity and encouragement to use their skills in a range of situations and for a range of purposes, and be supported in developing the confidence and disposition to do so. Communication should be developed through stories, songs, games, imaginative play, role play, group and circle time so that children become confident and articulate in many different situations.

A unique Child

Communicating and being with others helps children to build social relationships which provide opportunities for friendship, empathy and sharing emotions. The ability to communicate helps children to participate more fully in society. To become skilful communicators, babies and children need to be with people with whom they have warm and loving relationships, such as their family or carers and, in a group situation, a key person whom they know and trust. All children learn best through activities and experience that engage all the senses, for example music, dance, rhymes and songs play a key role in language development.

Positive Relationships

We will aim to:

- Help children to communicate thoughts, ideas and feeling and build up relationships with adults and with each other.
- Give daily opportunities to share and enjoy a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books, rhymes, music, songs, poetry and stories.
- Talk and listen to children and engage them as partners in conversation. Show sensitivity to the many different ways that children express themselves non-verbally, and encourage children to communicate their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a range of expressive forms, such as body movement, art, dance and songs.
- Identify and respond to any particular difficulties in children's language development at an early stage.

Enabling Environments

We will aim to:

- Provide time and relaxed opportunities for children to develop spoken language through sustained conversations between children and adults, both on a one-to-one and in small groups; and between children themselves.
- Allow children time to initiate conversations, respect their thinking time and silences and help them develop the interaction.
- Link language with physical movement in action songs and rhymes, role-play and practical experiences such as cookery and gardening.
- Provide a language rich environment that is stimulating and exciting and which takes account of children's different interests, understanding, home backgrounds and culture and encourages children to talk, remember, tell stories and ask and answer questions.
- Show a particular awareness and sensitivity to the needs of children learning English as an additional language, using their home language where appropriate and ensuring close teamwork between practitioners and parents.
- For children who may need to use alternative communication systems provide opportunities for them to discover ways of sharing and recording ideas.

Prime Areas Of Development - Physical Development

A Unique Child

Physical development in the foundation stage is about improving skills of coordination, control, manipulation and movement. Physical development has two other very important aspects. It helps children gain confidence in what they can do and enables them to feel the positive benefits of being healthy and active. Effective physical development helps children develop a positive sense of well-being.

Positive Relationships

To give all children the best opportunities for effective physical development, we will focus on:

- planning activities that offer appropriate physical challenges
- providing sufficient space, indoors and outdoors, to set up relevant activities
- giving sufficient time for children to use a range of equipment including scissors, pencils and pens
- providing resources that can be used in a variety of ways or to support specific skills
- introducing the language of movement to children, alongside their actions
- providing time and opportunities for children with physical disabilities or motor impairments to develop their physical skills, working as necessary with physiotherapists and occupational therapists
- using additional adult help, if necessary, to support individuals and to encourage increased independence in physical activities

Enabling Environments

Young children's physical development is inseparable from all other aspects of development because they learn through being active and interactive. Young children use all their senses to learn about the world around them and make connections between new information and what they already know. We will aim to provide:

- plenty of time to explore, experiment and refine movements and actions unhurriedly
- a safe, well planned and resourced learning environment
- support in other areas of learning through physical activity
- opportunities for children to use and learn using all their senses
- activities which build on children's developing skills to promote confidence and independence
- opportunities for regular and frequent physical activity indoors and outdoors
- ensuring that space is safe to use, and that outdoor clothing is safe and sensible
- a range of stimuli for movement, such as action rhymes, stories, music and props
- opportunities to introduce the vocabulary of movement and words of instruction
- teaching directly skills such as using a pencil or a pair of scissors, picking up a bulky object, getting onto the slide
- a range and sufficient quantity of small objects to handle
- countering stereotypical behaviours that hinder children's development

Specific Areas Of Development - Mathematical Development

Mathematical development depends on becoming confident and competent in learning and using key skills. This area of learning includes counting, sorting, matching, seeking patterns, making connections, recognising relationships and working with numbers, shapes, space and measures.

A Unique Child

Mathematical understanding should be developed through stories, songs, ICT, games and imaginative play, so that children enjoy using and experimenting with shapes, patterns, measures and numbers.

Positive Relationships

We will aim to maximise children's mathematical development which arises out of daily experiences within a rich and interesting environment by:

- helping children to see themselves as mathematicians, and develop positive attitudes towards their learning
- maintaining children's enthusiasm and confidence when they begin to record mathematics
- planning a range of mathematical opportunities
- making good use of opportunities to talk 'mathematically' as children play or take part in normal daily activities eg do we have enough cups for everyone?
- encouraging children's mathematical development by intervening in their play and introducing mathematical resources or concepts
- developing children's thinking by showing an interest in methods, not just solutions
- ensuring that mathematical development does not depend on specific "mathematical resources"
- being confident about ourselves as mathematicians and understand the links between different areas of mathematics

Enabling Environments

To give all children the best opportunities for effective mathematical development, we will aim to provide:

- Many different activities, some of which will focus on mathematical development and some of which will draw out the mathematical learning in other activities, including observing numbers and patterns in the environment and daily routines
- Practical activities underpinned by children's developing communication skills
- Activities which are imaginative and enjoyable, using real objects and situations wherever possible
- Opportunities for child initiated activities within a carefully planned environment, which promote learning and can be extended
- Purposeful activities which have meaning and relate to everyday life
- Learning opportunities which consolidate and extend children's mathematical skills through games and songs
- Help for those children who use a means of communication other than spoken English in developing and understanding specific mathematical language

Specific Areas Of Development - Expressive Arts And Design

A Unique Child

Creativity and expression are fundamental to successful learning. Being creative enables children to make connections between one area of learning and another and so extend their understanding. Expressive arts and design encompasses art, music, dance, design technology, role play and imaginative play.

Positive relationships

To give all children the opportunity to express themselves creatively we aim to provide:

- Sufficient time for children to explore, develop ideas and to finish working on their ideas
- An environment where children feel secure to try new experiences and ways of doing things and where their work is valued
- Time to talk to children about their work, using the appropriate vocabulary
- Encouragement for children to be creative in their own right and not be expected to reproduce someone else's picture, model, dance or recipe
- Opportunities for children to access learning through all of their senses

Enabling Environments

We aim to provide:

- a stimulating environment in which creativity, originality and expressiveness are valued
- a wide range of activities that children can respond to by using many different senses
- opportunities for children to express their ideas and feelings through a wide range of types of representation
- Attractive resources of good quality
- Resources from a wide variety of cultures to stimulate different ways of thinking, for example music and art from around the world
- Opportunities to work alongside artists and other creative adults
- Opportunities for all children, including those with visual impairment, to access and have physical contact with artefacts, materials, spaces and movements
- Opportunities for all children including those with hearing impairment, to experience sound through physical contact with instruments and other sources of sound
- Opportunities for all children, including those who cannot communicate by voice, to respond to music in different ways, such as gestures
- Resources and opportunities for representation which reflect children's specific religious or cultural beliefs

Specific Areas Of Development - Literacy

Literacy encompasses reading and writing. Phonic knowledge is developed along with the ability to recognize familiar words and text in books and the environment. Early grammar is also introduced with the idea of a simple sentence.

A Unique Child

In order to succeed in reading and writing children need to develop the ability to distinguish between sounds and become familiar with rhyme, rhythm and alliteration. They need plenty of opportunity to understand and enjoy stories, books, songs and rhymes and to recognise that print carries meaning. Children need to build an understanding of the relationship between the spoken and written word and how, through making marks, drawing and personal writing they ascribe meaning to text and attempt or write for various purposes.

Positive Relationships

We will aim to:

- Give children daily opportunities to share and enjoy a wide range of fiction and non-fiction
- Allow children to see adults reading and writing and encourage children to experiment with writing for themselves, through making marks, personal writing symbols and conventional script
- Develop children's phonological awareness, particularly through rhyme and alliteration and their knowledge of the alphabet
- Develop children's awareness of languages and writing systems other than English, and communication systems such as signing and braille

Enabling Environments

We will aim to provide:

- An environment that is rich in signs, symbols, notices, numbers, rhymes, books, pictures, music, poetry and songs that take into account children's different interests, understanding, home backgrounds and cultures; including book corners, displays, role play areas, reading and writing opportunities in all classroom areas for example information books, signs pens and paper as part of small world play, construction, maths displays

- Time for children to browse and share these resources with adults and other children
- Opportunities for children to act out, re-tell and record stories, using props, puppets and ICT equipment
- Exciting activities which help children to distinguish between sounds and to make the link between sounds and symbols (letters)
- At the appropriate stage of development: multisensory activities which introduce children to synthetic phonics, including providing simple texts for decoding
- Plenty of opportunities to make marks and experiment with writing in all areas of the classroom and during focus activities, for example writing names on art work, recording numbers during a maths game, recipes when cooking

Specific Areas Of Development - Understanding The World

A Unique Child

In this area of learning, children are developing the crucial knowledge, skills and understanding that help them to make sense of the world. This forms the foundation for later work in science, design and technology, history, geography, and information and communication technology.

Positive Relationships

We will aim to provide:

- Activities based on first hand experiences which encourage exploration, observation, problem solving, prediction, critical thinking, decision making and discussion
- Opportunities for child initiated learning, building on what children already know and showing them how to access further information: non-fiction books, internet
- An atmosphere of mutual learning where children are encouraged to ask questions, give their opinions and to share their knowledge with adults and other children
- Opportunities to introduce ideas, skills and the correct vocabulary to help consolidate and extend learning and investigation
- Activities which make effective use of the outside area and the local environment

Enabling Environments

We will aim to provide:

- Opportunities to build on children's knowledge of their own family, culture and community
- Resources which reflect the diversity of both local area and the global community
- Visits from local people who work or live in the area
- Trips and visits in the local area to consolidate and extend children's learning
- Opportunities that help children become aware of, explore and question differences in gender, ethnicity, language, religion, special educational needs and disability issues
- Help to learn positive attitudes and to challenge negative attitudes
- A wide range of activities both inside and outside which stimulate children's interest and curiosity
- An appropriate range of up-to-date technology to enhance children's learning

Specific Areas Of Development - Special Educational Needs And Disabilities

Monitoring of each child's progress is essential to ensure that they are making progress and that particular difficulties in any of the areas of learning, whatever the cause, are identified and addressed. This process needs to start before the child starts nursery by listening to parents' accounts of their child's development and noting any concerns. Prompt and appropriate action at this stage could help to prevent children from developing learning difficulties later in their school career. There will be a small number of children who have special educational needs or disabilities that will require specific provision,

such as specialist teaching, adapted equipment or support from an adult for particular activities. It is essential that these children are identified as soon as possible and appropriate support provided. Other children may be more-able and need activities that offer an appropriate challenge. Monitoring of each child's progress throughout the foundation stage will also ensure that their achievements can be celebrated.

Children entitled to Pupil Premium or Vulnerable Two year old funding

At Flagg Nursery School we run intervention groups for children at risk of delay in Communication and Language (ECAT: every child a talker), Physical Development (ECAM: every child a mover) and PSED (nurture groups). During staff meetings the staff team discusses every child individually and decides whether they would benefit from extra support in these areas. If so, a CMT (child monitoring tool) is completed for CL and PD and the Leuven scales assessment for PSED. Interventions are then planned, delivered and regularly assessed. For children in receipt of pupil premium or Vulnerable two year old funding CMT's and Leuven assessments are completed automatically. Intervention groups are planned by a member of staff whose salary is paid for with our enhanced resource grant and pupil premium money.

Higher Ability Children

All children are given individual targets in literacy and maths and all activities are planned according to each child's previous attainment. If a child is working above their age-band then activities planned for them will reflect this. If a child shows particular promise in a certain area of the curriculum then individual challenges and activities will be planned for them.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the teaching and learning policy.

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