



# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

**Learning Together, Achieving Together**  
**Our Aim is to enable every child to shine.**

Approved by Staff:

Approved by Governors:

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Subject Leader: L Engall

## **Aim**

At Spixworth Infant School we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential.

## **The Early Years Foundation Stage**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is the time in a child's life between birth and age 5. At Spixworth Infant School we offer provision for children in our Reception classes (4-5 year olds). This is a very important stage as it helps a child get ready for their statutory school start as well as preparing them for their future learning and successes. At Spixworth we aim that a child's early years' experience is happy, active, exciting, fun and secure; and support their development, care and learning needs.

In our Foundation Stage classes, we follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework which is statutory guidance published in 2020.

It sets out:

- The legal welfare requirements that everyone registered to look after children must follow to keep a child **safe** and promote their welfare
- The 7 areas of **learning and development** which guide professionals' engagement with a child's play and activities as they learn new skills and knowledge
- Assessments that will inform everyone about **a child's progress** through the EYFS
- Expected levels that a child should reach at age 5, usually the end of the reception year; these expectations are the "Early Learning Goals (ELGs)"

(Please refer to Statutory Framework for further information)

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon four principles which are at the heart of our approach to educating our youngest children:

- A unique child - developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
- Positive relationships - supporting the children in becoming strong and independent.
- Enabling environments with teaching and support from adults - where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child.
- Learning and developing - An acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates.

## **Transition into Reception**

The transition into Reception is carefully planned for and time given to ensure continuity of learning. At any transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings, including nurseries and childminders.

- Visits are made, where possible, to all pre-school providers to establish contact with children in their pre-school setting.
- Pre-school children are invited into school for 'taster' sessions prior to joining the school.
- There is a welcome meeting for parents of prospective Reception children before 'taster' sessions begin. This meeting is an opportunity for the Head teacher and EYFS leader to explain the school day, routine and procedures and to answer any questions. The ethos of working together is introduced and parents are encouraged to discuss any possible worries or concerns at any time during their child's schooling (see Behaviour Policy and Homework Policy).
- We encourage parents and pre-school providers to share the child's Learning Story with us.

Reception children start full time in September. The school supports parental choice with regard to part-time transition into Reception, offering morning sessions only in the first instance, if requested and in the best interests of the child. The school works closely with families to quickly work toward full-time entry.

## **Principles into Practice**

### **A Unique Child**

We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use positive praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/ sharing assemblies and awards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

### **Inclusion/Special Educational Needs (SEN)**

All children and their families are valued in our school irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage.

(Refer to SEN policy for further information)

### **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;
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- 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.

## **Welfare**

It is important to us that all children in our school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all our children.

*"Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them." EYFS guidance April 2020*

At our school we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2020.

We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare and safeguarding of children (refer to child protection policy and safeguarding policy)
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill (refer to health and safety policy)
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs (refer to behaviour and anti-bullying policies)
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so (refer to safeguarding and recruitment policies)
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose. This includes educating the children about the school's fire safety procedures throughout the year. Each term a fire alarm test and evacuation takes place (refer to health and safety policy).
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

## **Positive Relationships**

At Spixworth Infant School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

## **Parents as Partners**

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children.

We do this through:

- An open day for prospective parents in the Autumn Term
- An information event for parents in the Summer Term where they receive essential information about the school such as start and finish times, uniform and informs the parents of the schools vision and aims.
- Ensuring children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during transition sessions.
- An information event for new parents early in the Autumn Term focussing on school routines and providing a question and answer session with staff
- Asking parents to sign permission slips for visits out of school, photographs of their child for assessment purposes and using the internet at school.
- Encouraging parents to talk to their child's teacher if there are concerns.
- Inviting parents to attend informal meetings providing information about other areas of the curriculum, e.g. Early Reading, Maths and Phonics.
- There are four parent/teacher/child progress and target setting meetings throughout the year where it is discussed how we can work together to support your individual child. Parents receive records of these discussions at the time of the meetings and a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- Organising a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents/carers such as reading cafes, sharing afternoons, class assemblies, Sports Day

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our schools, the EYFS teachers with the EYFS TAs act as 'Key Persons' to all children in EYFS. We value our good links with the feeder preschools and work to ensure a smooth transition for children joining our Foundation Stage classes.

### **Equal Opportunities**

All members of the school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse society.

### **Enabling Environments**

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to indoor and outdoor environments that are set up in support of all seven areas of learning and in response to children's own play as planned continuous provision.

The outdoor area is an extension of the classroom and is used by both nursery and reception children.

Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and following children's interest. Effective planning is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests and experiences. Play based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning.

To support with a child's learning the classroom and outdoor space will promote personal and social skills, language and mathematical development through displays and material that is on display. It will encourage children to be reflective about their learning and promote high expectations. The learning spaces will be kept neat and tidy to ensure that children can freely access resources promoting their independence and a respect for the space that they are learning in.

### **Health and Safety**

- Fresh drinking water is available at all times
- Fresh fruit or vegetables are available daily
- Children's' dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required and shared with lunchtime staff
- All staff are first aid trained and records of accidents or injuries are kept according to school policy
- All staff are aware of health concerns and/or dietary requirements of individual children
- Risk assessments of the learning environment and of activities are undertaken and actioned on appropriately.

### **Learning and Development**

Teachers and early years support staff provide the curriculum in the Reception class for up to 45 children.

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve and exceed the early learning goals.

### **Seven Areas of Learning**

All the seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

#### **Communication and Language**

#### **Physical Development**

#### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

Children are also supported through the four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The specific areas of development and learning are:

#### **Literacy**

#### **Mathematics**

#### **Understanding the World**

#### **Expressive Arts and Design**

The early learning goals (ELGs) above are not used as a curriculum or in any way to limit the wide variety of rich experiences that are crucial to child development. The ELGs are used to support teachers to make a holistic, best-fit judgement about a child's development and their readiness for Year 1.

### **The Characteristics of Learning**

At Spixworth Infant School we support children in using the three 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; and
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

(Taken from statutory framework for the EYFS 2020)

It is expected that staff's planning ensures that there are opportunities for playing and exploring, being active, and creative and critical thinking.

### **Organisation**

- Children are taught in two Reception classes. Depending on the number of children entering school each year, a decision is made each Summer term as to whether the children will be taught in single or mixed-age classes. The Spixworth Reception Experience is carefully considered for children in either single or mixed-age classes. Please see Appendix 1.
- Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which children explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development in line with the Foundation Stage guidance
- As a team, we write long term and medium term plans using the EYFS based on a series of topics each of which offers experiences in all seven areas. These plans are reviewed by the Headteacher. These plans then inform our short-term planning, alongside our observations, which remains flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses.
- Children participate in whole and small group activities; these include daily phonics sessions using Letters and Sounds, guided and shared reading and writing, Maths and topic activities.
- The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS.
- 'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities'
- We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. During children's play, early years practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children further.
- In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice.
- We create a stimulating environment to encourage children to free-flow between inside and out.

## **Assessment in the Foundation Stage**

### **Ongoing Observation and Assessment: Tapestry**

As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. We record our observations using Tapestry, an online Learning Journal.

Records will include:

- Initial Reception baseline information; your child's starting point
- Examples of children's work (mark making, writing, number, drawings etc)
- Photographs and video of children's learning
- Notelets including observations by staff
- Notes/work from home submitted by parents/carers
- Records on Tapestry should reflect all 7 areas of learning and will usually be linked to a Development Matters age band assessment.

These ongoing observations are linked to Development Matters age bands and inform the EYFS Profile. Parents have unlimited access to their own child's online account. They can see every entry made and are encouraged to comment on observations and add their own to provide a full and rounded picture of their child's development. The child's progress is reviewed and regularly discussed with parents. Senior staff will use assessment information to discuss with teachers each child's progress. Any child identified as not making the desired or expected progress will be targeted for additional support. This may take the form of additional adult support, referrals to other services, meetings with parents/carers, additional or specialised resources or working with the Class Teacher to adapt provision within the setting to meet the child's needs.

### **Foundation Stage profile**

At the end of the EYFS – it is a statutory responsibility of the school to make a 'best fit' judgement for each Reception child against the Early Learning Goals and complete the EYFS profile. This assessment is based on what staff caring for a child have observed over a period of time and what the child's learning is showing when they work independently. A child is judged to be working at 'expected' level or at 'emerging' expected level. This information is shared with the Local Authority and with parents/carers in the child's end of year report.

Parents/carers are given the opportunity to discuss these judgements with the Reception teacher.

### **Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage**

The Foundation stage classes and team of staff are led and managed by the Early Years Leader. It is their responsibility with support from senior staff and the governing body to ensure that the statutory responsibilities outlined in the EYFS framework are adhered to and implemented at Spixworth Infant School. This takes place by completing the following duties:

- Daily checks within classrooms and with Foundation Stage staff
- Regular meetings to disseminate and gather information
- Monitoring of all Foundation Stage policies and guidelines including any communication with parents/carers



- Monitoring of learning by observing practice in class, looking at children's work/Tapestry journals, discussions with children and looking at data
- Being a member of the school's senior leadership team
- Supplying monitoring reports to the Head Teacher and governing body
- Liaising with parent/carers and other stakeholders

### **Transition into Year 1**

Throughout the school year Reception children access some learning and play areas with Key Stage 1 children. The EYFS and Key Stage 1 teachers work together to plan and deliver many elements of the curriculum.

Over the course of the year, as each individual child is ready, a gradual degree of formality is included into the school day. By the second half of the Summer term, Reception children are included in a greater number of adult initiated activities. and have 'taster' sessions where they take on the role of Year 1 children.

In the final term in Reception, the respective teacher and Year 1 teacher liaise to discuss the individual children, their progress and targets and analyse the assessment data to inform planning and ensure the needs of each child continue to be met. Children also have an induction session in the Summer term with their new teacher/class.

Appendix 1.  
The Spixworth Reception Experience

Year R in single and mixed-age classes	
Autumn 1	Settling/Getting to know me inc All About Me
	Baseline assessments, Wellcomm and Nelli
	Access to high quality, well planned provision areas
	Adults immersed in play, next steps to be given and support to meet these recorded on Tapestry
	Reading: Children will read in school every day. They will be sent home reading material; Day 1: Real book for enjoying with an adult at home Week 3: first word list home, extending to captions then Phase 2 reading books
	Phonics: Week 1&2: Phase 1 Week 3+: Phase 2
	Playtime = snack and chat
	Daily Maths input following White Rose
	One entry per week to adult-led books
	Observations on Tapestry from 7 areas of learning in high quality environments indoor and out
	PE Assembly in classrooms
Autumn 2	Introduce Story scribes focus on language and use of initial sounds into adult-led books
	Phonics: Phase 2/3
	Weekly adult input including Eng/Maths
Spring 1	Introduction of English Books – used following Write Stuff plans
	Phonics: Phase 3 to include caption writing
	Assembly in hall
Spring 2	Playtime with KS1 if required
Summer 1	Phonics: Phase 4 introduced
	Playtime with KS1
Summer 2	Number Masters introduced