

FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Amendment History

Revision	Author	Description of change	Date
1	Karen Walls	Amendment history added	October 2005
KASC policy	Carol Hooper	Adapted from adopted Kineton Playgroup policy	August 2006
2	CH/SM	Review, no change required	March 2007
3	CH/SM	Merge KASC and Playgroup policies; update footer	September 2007
4	CH/SM	Amendments to reflect changes in the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.	October 2008
5	CH/AF	Further amendments to reflect changes in practice following implementation of Foundation Stage	October 2009
6	CH/AF	Reference to short term planning	October 2010
7	CH/AF/ HS	Reference to leaflets created by board members	September 2011
8	CH	Update to include principles and policies of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2012)	September 2012
9	CH/KG	Update to include reference Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2014) and non-statutory supporting documentation, and SEN Code of Conduct 2014	September 2014
10	CH	No substantive amendments	November 2016
11	CH & SF	Reviewed, no change necessary	February 2018
12	CH & SF	Reviewed, no change necessary	January 2020
13	CH	Update EYFS references	July 2022
14	CH, TH & XF	Reviewed, no substantive amendments	July 2023

FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Introduction

We believe that the Foundation Stage is an important and crucial part of a child's learning. We work within the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021, as amended from time to time (EYFS), together with non-statutory supporting documentation, and ensure that planning relates to children's in order that they will progress through the foundation stage. Children are treated as individuals; their needs are matched to the curriculum document and are carefully planned for. The children are involved in a range of adult directed and adult and child-initiated learning activities. They are encouraged to learn through their own exploration, in structured play activities, and through a balance of adult and self-directed tasks. We aim to give children opportunities and activities through which they will achieve and experience success and enjoyment, thereby fostering positive attitudes to learning.

We believe that this positive philosophy towards encouraging mastery learning dispositions should also underpin our general approach and practice for children of all ages. We recognise that we form part of the child's experience and liaise closely with other childcare practitioners and settings working with that child. We recognise that the foundation stage continues into reception and maintain close liaison with the local primary school for reception aged children who attend KASC.

In the Foundation Stage, our aims are:

- To understand and provide for children's rapid development during the early years physically, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually
- To observe and respond appropriately to children, their needs and interests
- To give the children a range of rich and stimulating experiences and challenges ensuring the learning environment is well planned and well organised
- To ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued
- To ensure that children's achievements are celebrated
- To build on what individual children know, setting appropriate targets for further learning and development
- To work closely with parents/carers in order to build a wider picture of the child
- To ensure that all practitioners in the setting are clear about objectives relating to different activities and the aims of the setting
- To provide a relevant and meaningful curriculum for the children
- To provide opportunities for children to engage in activities planned by adults as well as those initiated by themselves
- To develop a love and enthusiasm for learning

- To develop children's moral and spiritual attitudes
- To ensure desired behaviour is modelled and acknowledged at all times

How can Parents and Carers get involved?

(Parent Involvement & Community Links Policies)

Parents are encouraged to work together with us. For example, parents and carers are invited to come in for parent engagement sessions and to support fundraising. Parents have the opportunity to take part in management through becoming a board member, and to attend events at Helen's Place and elsewhere, and are given opportunities to meet and build supportive relationships with the manager, staff and all board members.

We encourage parental involvement all the way through Playgroup and KASC as good communication and partnership with home is essential.

Playgroup provides information to parents about stages in child development through the regular newsletters, communication evenings. Playgroup facilitates courses throughout the year on various aspects of child development and education.

Learning journals are kept to record every child's development and progress in the foundation stage and can be viewed at any time or during the half termly sharing afternoon. Parents' Consultation meetings for Playgroup parents are held every term where progress can be discussed. New starters are also offered a meeting within the first few weeks of starting to discuss how the child is settling in.

The best form of communication is usually direct and immediate and we urge parents to communicate any worries, fears, concerns or celebrations so that they can be followed up as soon as possible.

Planning

Planning is based on the circle of Observation (of the child), Assessment (analysis) and Planning (next steps). This formative assessment process is the base of our practice and the support we provide for each child's individual learning and development. Summative assessments, based on the EYFS including Early years outcomes and birth to five, are also carried out as snapshots of development at points during a child's time at pre-school, so that we can consider whether they show typical development and progress for their age.

We use the EYFS and supporting documentation and documents, and general principles of child development practice, as the basis for our planning. Desired learning objectives and skills acquisitions, together with the stages and interests of the children, are considered together in forming medium term plans or frameworks for learning. These plans may suggest desired targets and processes as well as outcomes and learning activities. These may

change when it comes to the short-term planning due to the progress children have or have not made, or their spontaneous interests. All members of staff, where possible, follow the children's interests, teaching the appropriate objectives through meaningful and relevant topics with the children. This is recorded in the short-term planning documentation, including the children's learning journals and assessments.

Planning should include:

- Objectives to be covered (differentiation to be indicated)
- Skills and learning intentions to be taught and practised
- Activities planned to meet these objectives (though these may change according to the needs of the children).
- Assessment notes (such as, those who have not met the objectives or those who have exceeded them, future steps, support needed, areas of interest which could be used to advance a child's thinking and learning skills).
- Adult role in the educative process.

Learning and development

We aim to provide the opportunities and structures to enable every child to learn and to develop to reach their potential – for 'each unique child to [have] opportunities to interact in positive relationships and enabling environments'.

'The ways in which the child engages with other people and their environment – playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically – underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

The **Characteristics of Effective Learning** and the prime and specific Areas of Learning and Development are all interconnected.

The **prime areas** develop quickly in response to relationships and experiences, and run through and support learning in all other areas. The **prime areas** continue to be fundamental throughout the EYFS.

Prime areas:

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

The **specific areas** include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society.

Specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics

- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Through observation of the ways in which a child learns, adults can plan and support their developmental needs.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning:

- Playing and Exploring – engagement
 - Finding out and exploring
 - Playing with what they know
 - Being willing to ‘have a go’
- Active learning – motivation
 - Being involved and concentrating
 - Keeping trying
 - Enjoying achieving what they set out to do
- Creating and thinking critically
 - Having their own ideas
 - Making links
 - Choosing ways to do things

Monitoring, Assessment and Record Keeping

Children’s progress is constantly monitored and used to guide those next small steps. Much of this monitoring is not necessarily documented, but is used when planning children’s next steps in learning.

Practitioners must also timetable appropriately in order to assess the children through observation and it is then that notes may be made. This is often most effective when they are the member of staff’s own jottings. Members of staff should observe the children playing, talking, listening and interacting as well as assessing specific academic objectives. These observations are used to record successes and help in forward planning.

Each child has a folder in which their learning journals, assessments, observations, and examples of work are kept. Photographs can also be used to record the individual’s progress. Children and parents are also encouraged to contribute to the own records of their achievements and activities

Teaching and Learning Implications

In order for effective teaching and learning to take place an enabling environment is necessary.

An outdoor area is an important aspect of children’s learning in the Foundation Stage. It is an area where they can make bigger, bolder movements, where they can experiment with more messy and ‘dangerous’ activities in a safe and controlled manner. Children also have timetabled access to sessions at our Forest School site.

Practitioners plan for learning to occur in both indoor and outdoor areas through direct teaching and/or child-initiated learning.

Most of the learning activities take place through play-based, practical tasks, and through the process of doing rather than producing an end product. This means that the children will not be producing enormous amounts of written work.

Effective teaching and learning:

- Assessments of the children are used for planning and to move them up through the steps of learning.
- The environment supports the teaching and learning of the EYFS. The children are aware of where their resources are, they can access them and feel confident within their learning environment.
- Children are given time to work through given ideas and tasks. Adult support is available where necessary, although children are encouraged to become independent learners.
- Planning reflects the stage of development of the individual children and builds on what they can already do.

Special educational and Additional Needs

Children's individual needs are carefully monitored, and where it seems a child may have or develop difficulties in a specific area, notes are kept by members of staff. Sometimes a child may not be achieving as much as his or her peers because of a lack of maturity or experience. Age plays a crucial part in development. When thinking about the needs of the individual child it is important to take short and long-term circumstances into account – eg a house move or death of a pet or relative may affect a child's development for a shorter or longer period of time.

Children who may have additional needs, as well as those with special educational needs are included on our Additional and Special Needs Register, in order to help provide the appropriate support for the child. We hope that all children will learn and progress in our play-based learning environment. More information is contained in the Special Educational Needs Policy.