



Polehampton C. of E. Schools

Foundation Stage Policy

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Document History

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1	March 11	Formalised policy	11	
2	May 17	Policy review following statutory framework review	15	
3	20.10.21	<i>Policy review following statutory framework review</i>	10	N Bradshaw

Our Intent

At Polehampton C. of E. Infant School, we are committed to providing a safe, happy, secure and stimulating learning environment for our Foundation Stage children. Our practice is shaped by the seven key features of effective practice as defined in the non-statutory Development Matters guidance and the four guiding principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) as defined in the statutory EYFS framework. Our holistic curriculum is designed to promote independence, curiosity and resilience and to develop learners who are confident communicators and demonstrate high levels of engagement and motivation in their learning.

We provide learning experiences that enhance, develop and extend children's intellectual, social, emotional, cultural, moral, physical and creative development. We create a vibrant environment that supports our curriculum and provides opportunities for children to demonstrate their learning attitudes and behaviours through the characteristics of effective learning. Children are encouraged to follow their personal interests, provided opportunities to acquire new knowledge and revisit, build upon and apply prior learning through open-ended experiences. We nurture each child as an individual and work in partnership with parents/carers to provide information on how they can best support their child's development at home. We provide a supportive and inclusive experience where everyone is valued and all achievements are celebrated.

'The EYFS is about how children learn, as well as what they learn. Children need opportunities to develop their own play and independent exploration. This is enjoyable and motivating. They also need adults to 'scaffold' their learning by giving them just enough help to achieve something they could not do independently. Helping children to think, discuss and plan ahead is important, like gathering the materials they need to make a den before they start building. These are ways of helping children to develop the characteristics of effective learning. When we give every child the best start in their early years, we give them what they need today. We also set them up with every chance of success tomorrow.'

Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2021

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.'

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2021

Non-Statutory Development Matters Guidance 2021

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/development-matters--2>

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

Our Implementation

Starting School

At Polehampton, we believe that the very start of each child's school education has a significant impact on how they settle in. We have an induction period, which, allows children to become familiar with the setting, the staff and their new friends. Parents are able to defer their child's start to school to the term after their child's 5th birthday. We can also offer a part-time place for children in their first term (mornings only) if it is felt necessary. Deferring and/or part-time places are discussed with parents and the child's previous setting to support the decision making process.

- Parents are invited to visit the school and meet the head teacher and staff team before admission.
- Parents and children are welcomed to school events prior to starting such as the Spring Fair.
- An induction 'Welcome' booklet for children is available on the school website so that children can become familiar with Blue Class teachers and staff team at the school as well as their new learning environment. Our school website has accessible links to videos recorded by class teachers including songs and stories.
- School staff visit each of our pre-school feeder settings to meet the new children and liaise with the pre-school staff.
- Parents are invited to a welcome session when they meet school staff and find out basic school information including class routines and procedures. When and where necessary, information may be shared via pre-recorded videos. Videos will be followed up by a scheduled, live, online meeting, presented in the form of a question and answer session.
- Children and parents are invited to a 'stay and play' morning, which they spend in their class with their teacher and new friends. Individual 'meet and greet' sessions can also be arranged when and where necessary.
- When possible children spend an induction morning in school before entry. During this session, parents are introduced to other relevant members of the school community; governors, PTA, admin staff and are given further information so they are ready to start school in September.
- During the summer holiday, before the children start school, each child will receive a personalised postcard from Blue Class teachers and staff. As an exciting reminder that we are looking forward to seeing them soon.
- Records are received from feeder preschools.
- Early in the autumn term, parents are invited to a meeting about teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage including ideas of how parents can help their child at home.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Our approach is guided by:

The seven key features of effective practice.

- The best for every child
- High-quality care
- Curriculum
- Pedagogy
- Assessment
- Self-regulation and executive function
- Partnership with parent

The four distinct yet complementary EYFS principles.

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

A Unique Child

In our setting children are nurtured as individuals enabling them to become confident, independent learners.

Inclusion

We ensure that all children, parents and staff feel valued and included within a culture of mutual respect. Diversity is embraced and celebrated within our setting as part of our everyday interactions. Everyone is given a fair and equal chance to thrive and grow in self-esteem.

- We give our children every opportunity to be the best they can be; planning is adapted to meet the needs of each cohort, with individual plans in place where necessary.
- We plan opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- We use a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs.
- We monitor each child's progress and development regularly. More frequent meetings are in place to review children who are making less than expected progress. Interventions may be put in place to support learning or behaviour as appropriate.
- We work closely with parents, carers and outside agencies to ensure all children's needs are met and to enable them all to access the curriculum to make good progress.
- Every child has a 'Brilliant book' in which practitioners and parents can record any special moments which are shared and celebrated on a regular basis.
- Each child's learning journey record book details their achievements throughout the year. Children and parents love to look at their books which are readily available. They reflect on their learning and feel proud of their skills and work.
- A class floor book is added to weekly to enable children to reflect upon prior learning and experiences.
- Every week, each class has a "person of the week". The whole class discusses this child, gathering many positive thoughts about them, which are written up and displayed for all to see. This child takes home the "special box", returning with the box filled with their special things from home to show and tell.

- Home-learning frequently involves opportunities for the children to follow their own interests, taking open-ended tasks in their preferred direction, i.e. special celebrations.
- Children with additional needs might have a personalised timetable/supported learning environment, i.e. planned sessions in the Rainbow or Sunshine room, a workstation, different equipment, additional adult time.
- We adhere to the schools' **Inclusion Policy**, which, is available on our website.

Positive Relationships

Children build positive identities through collaborative, caring relationships with peers and adults. Our ethos engenders a culture of respect for one another. We place utmost importance on developing caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families; we want our children to feel reassured by calm, consistent and positive adults.

Supporting Learning

Adults have a crucial role in stimulating and supporting children to reach beyond their current limits by inspiring learning and supporting development through active interaction, guidance and support which, challenges and extends their thinking. This may include:

- Use of open ended and probing questions
- Modelling
- Scaffolding
- Extending vocabulary by describing
- Supporting children in conflict resolution
- Building confidence through praise and encouragement

All staff know and work with all the children; however, each child will have a key person assigned to them. This will be their class teacher. The class teacher has responsibility for detailed assessment and record keeping.

Parents as Partners

We believe that when parents and practitioners work together the results have a positive impact on children's development and learning. We welcome parental contributions regarding children's development and their brilliant moments.

We encourage parental involvement through:

- A thorough induction period
- An 'open door' policy
- Procedural and Curriculum parent meetings and workshops
- Assemblies, sports day
- Parent, teacher consultations termly – more frequent when requested by staff or parent
- Interim reports termly with one full annual report
- Parental questionnaires; "Tell us about your child"
- Welcoming parent volunteers in class or on trips
- Contributions to learning records
- Home learning, i.e. personalised learning packs for child making less than expected progress, tailored to their interests
- Brilliant books
- Newsletters

Working Together

- We work closely and communicate with colleagues from other professional backgrounds to ensure we support and meet the needs of each child for example speech therapists, physiotherapists and the school nurse.
- We encourage links with individuals and groups in the community who can share interests and expertise to enrich the children's experiences. We also involve children in learning which takes them into the local community such as a village walk or visit to the church

Enabling Environments

The Learning Environment

Our rich and varied environment supports every child's learning and development through experiences and planned activities that are challenging but achievable. It gives children the confidence to explore and learn in a secure and safe space. Our setting offers a range of stimulating, open ended and readily accessible resources both indoors and out which children can use and combine in their own way to meet their own purposes.

The indoor and outdoor learning environments are viewed as one combined and integrated environment where well planned and well-resourced play experiences allow for progression in children's thinking and understanding across all seven areas of learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception. Teachers are provided with a set of statements for each child, which provide a narrative description of how each child performed in the assessment. This must be shared with parents upon request.

Ongoing day-to-day assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process at Polehampton. It involves staff observing and knowing children's level of achievement and interests, and then shaping the teaching and learning experiences reflecting that knowledge. Evidence of each child's significant achievements and progress is kept in the form of notes, photos and examples of work in their personal individual learning journey and work books. These can be accessed by children and parents at any time.

- Planning is based on a flexible framework with scope for encompassing children's interests.
- Children are involved in creating the environment, i.e. organising resources for a role play area. This builds engagement and motivation as well as encouraging children to value the space as they feel more ownership.
- Observations and assessments inform planning for personalised learning.
- Children are involved in setting their own targets, so they begin to understand the process of learning.
- The children's learning journey is a working document, which includes parental and child contributions and helps inform the next steps in learning.
- ½ termly SEN tracking meetings are held with the school Inclusion Coordinator. .
- Termly tracking meetings are held with SLT.

In the final term of the year, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. Children are assessed against the 'Early Learning Goals' and a judgement is given as to whether they are 'Emerging' or 'Expected' in each of the 17 areas of learning. For further details of **statutory assessments**, see page 11 below.

Learning and Development

Our Foundation Stage curriculum is organised as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. Three areas are known as the prime areas and are seen as important for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The three prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through four specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Children access these areas of learning through a balance of child initiated and adult guided experiences both inside and outdoors.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the Characteristics of Effective Learning. These are regularly assessed through observations and planned for throughout the EYFS.

The three characteristics are:

- **Playing and Exploring** – children investigate and experience things and events around them and 'have a go'
- **Active Learning** – children concentrate and keep trying if they experience difficulties, as well as enjoying what they achieve
- **Creating and Thinking Critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between different experiences and develop strategies for doing things

Our Foundation Stage introduces the children to our "**Super Learner**" profile; these are animals (i.e. Amicable Ants) who embody the **characteristics of effective learning**. We want our children to develop all of these behaviours to support their learning and development.

Play and Exploration

The Foundation Stage curriculum is firmly based on play and independent learning, a framework which, has proved to be the most beneficial and supportive way for young children to learn at this vital stage of their education. It helps them to develop a positive attitude towards learning that encourages them to take initiatives.

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Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests. In play, children learn at their deepest level. Through play, children learn to interact with others, experience and manage feelings and to be in control of themselves and their abilities. When children initiate their own learning, they are intrinsically motivated and experiences are more meaningful.

Children are encouraged to be independent, to plan and make decisions about their own learning. Children actively review and share their learning experiences with peers and staff. In child initiated learning, it is the role of the staff is to further challenge their understanding and learning, through questioning, scaffolding, prompting and making suggestions.

Our setting inspires children to express themselves creatively and enables them to make discoveries through their play. It allows children to try things out, be inventive, practise ideas and skills and take risks. Staff support and challenge children's thinking to enable them to make connections in their thinking and extend their understanding.

****Coming Soon****

Forest School in Foundation Stage

Forest School promotes the holistic development of all those involved. It fosters resilient, confident, independent and creative learners. Learners are enabled to take risks and engage with challenges in a safe and supported environment. Play is encouraged and facilitated through provision that enables children to have freedom of choice with how to use and interpret activities and resources. The direction that activities and resources take during a Forest School session is child led. Planned activities will have had the children's input. The environmental provision provides a range of play opportunities e.g. seasonal changes and the effect this has on the weather and terrain. Forest School provides a wealth of opportunities to develop social interaction through collaborative team tasks such as den building. As part of every Forest School session, children are encouraged to reflect upon their learning and experiences. Taking part in Forest School will promote a connection with the natural world and encourage learners to reflect upon their own position within it. Learners will be gain a deeper knowledge of flora and fauna, its beauty, importance and value. This knowledge and connection with nature will instil a desire in learners to protect and conserve it.

Teaching and Learning

Alongside child initiated activities where adults have a key role in supporting learning, there is an important place for activities initiated by adults. Adult led activities provide opportunities for introducing new knowledge or ideas and for developing and practising new skills. The activities can provide a new stimulus or opportunity to revisit or further develop learning.

Adult led activities:

- Provide open-ended opportunities.
- Are organised in mixed attainment groups.
- Have clear specified learning objectives aimed at extending or consolidating what a child already knows.
- Children are organised into attainment-based groups for phonics.

Literacy

At Polehampton, we want to ensure that every single child in our schools gets the very best support in becoming confident speakers, fluent readers and willing writers. Across the Infant School we use the synthetic phonics programme Read Write Inc as developed by Ruth Miskin. The programme enables

children to develop decoding (reading) and encoding (spelling) skills and also has some excellent ditties to support with handwriting and letter formation.

Children share books individually, in groups and as a class. We work with children to develop their understanding of texts through whole class shared reading using 'Reading Vipers' to focus on the key areas of comprehension. We visit the school library weekly and enjoy choosing a new selection of books for our book box.

Home readers are matched to the child's phonics level and books are changed weekly. Children are encouraged to re-read for fluency, enjoyment and comprehension purposes. We use a reading scheme called Collin's Big Cat. These are written by some of the most popular children's authors. They are beautiful, individual looking books with brilliant stories and a wide range of interesting and unusual non-fiction. We complement the Big Cat books by using other schemes including Dandelion Readers, Jelly and Bean and Songbirds.

Maths

At Polehampton we have adopted a White Rose Maths Mastery approach to teaching.

Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between numbers and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding – such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting – children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary, from which mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics. This includes shape, space and measure. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

Safeguarding and Welfare

'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.'

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021

Safeguarding

We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory guidance.

Our Foundation Stage classes also comply with our whole school Safeguarding Policy; the designated officer for safeguarding is the Academy Head teacher, Miss Ball or the Infant Head teacher, Mrs Scott, or middle leader Mrs Bushell in her absence.

Welfare

It is important to us that all the children in the setting are safe. We create a safe and secure learning environment in which learners are stimulated and feel confident taking risks and engaging in challenging activities. We aim to protect the physical and psychological wellbeing of all children.

- We involve children in discussions about our expectations and set clear boundaries and rules to ensure everyone is safe and happy.

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- The learning environment and resources are checked regularly to ensure that they are fit and safe for purpose.
- We promote healthy lifestyles as part of our everyday curriculum and encourage and promote looking after physical and mental health, hygiene and exercise.
- Children readily have access to water and healthy snacks are available at playtime.
- Children receive a free carton of milk every day until their fifth birthday after which parents are able to sign up and pay for so that their child can continue receiving daily milk.
- We meet the statutory requirement of adult to child ratio.
- At the end of the school day, great care is taken to ensure children are released into the care of a named adult who has parental permission to collect the child.
- A trained paediatric first-aider is available at all times.

See the school's **Safeguarding Policy** and **Health and Safety Policy** for more information.

Our Impact

- Children feel safe and happy at school and feel confident taking risks and engaging in challenging activities.
- Children start year 1 with a positive and resilient attitude to learning.
- Children start year 1 confident communicators, fluent readers, and willing writers.
- Children start year one with a positive attitude and interest in mathematics.
- Children start year one with an understanding of effective learning behaviours.
- Children start year one with an understanding of the school values system.
- Children start year 1 with a positive sense of self, the ability to set themselves short term simple targets, and have confidence in their own abilities.

Continuing the Learning Journey

We are committed to ensuring that children experience a smooth transition from the Foundation Stage into Key Stage One. We aim to secure continuity throughout so that the pace and quality of learning are maintained and children continue to make excellent progress. The year one curriculum builds on and extends the experiences children have had during the Early Years Foundation Stage. We understand that all children are unique and therefore their transition experience will be unique. Parents are informed of what is happening in the transition process so that they feel comfortable to support their child through it.

Before the children move from the Foundation Stage into KS1, the child's current and future teachers have a dialogue about each individual's progress and achievements using the EYFS Profile. The child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective teaching and learning are also discussed and assist with the planning of activities in year 1. The future teacher will also be informed about any special educational needs and any other information relevant to their well-being and development.

Children will be involved in a transition morning during the summer term prior to starting in year one where they are introduced to their new teacher and classroom environment.

In the autumn term, parents are invited to a meeting to find out about the curriculum, organisation and routines of their child's new class.

Foundation Stage Assessment

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception. The RBA does not have to be completed in one sitting and the administrator may pause the assessment at any time they feel is appropriate.

Children’s reading, writing and mathematics attainment and progress against the Development Matters age related expectation is reviewed half termly and tracked on Target Tracker. Evidence used to inform these judgements includes observations of children engaged in self chosen activities, demonstrating they can be successful consistently and independently as well as some summative assessments. This central data enables the teachers to identify individuals and groups who are on track to meet the end of year expectation and where extra support may be needed in order to meet the end of year expectation.

In the Foundation Stage, children’s attainment and progress is shared with parents in the autumn and spring term in a parents meeting. At this meeting, parents are provided with an interim report: the report states where their child is currently working against the age related expectation. The interim report also includes targets, any intervention support a child has been receiving, as well as any areas for concern regarding behaviour and attendance.

An end of year report details the child’s attainment against all the Early Learning Goals (ELGs). National expectations are that children should achieve ‘expected’ when judged against the ELGs as they are based on typical child development at the age of 5. Children are defined as reaching a Good Level of Development (GLD) at the end of the year if they have attained at least expected in the prime areas (Communication and Language, Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Physical Development) of the curriculum and the specific areas of Mathematics and Literacy.

Emerging (1)	Expected (2)
Your child is working on elements of the ELG.	Your child consistently and independently demonstrates this ELG.

The final report includes targets, any intervention support a child has been receiving, as well as any areas for concern regarding behaviour and attendance. The final report also includes a commentary on each child’s skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective teaching and learning.

Day-to-Day Formative Assessment	Summative Assessment	National standardised summative assessment
<p><u>All areas of the curriculum</u> All FS staff make observations against the Development Matters age related curriculum criteria, noting when children can demonstrate something consistently and independently. Other evidence used to support judgements includes parental feedback to questionnaires and comments in children’s home learning and ‘Brilliant Books’.</p> <p><u>Reading</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual reading diaries are used daily at home and weekly in school to note and date significant attainment. <p><u>Writing</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children are given oral and written feedback, which includes pink (highlighting areas of success) and green (highlighting development/improvement areas) marking. • Target stamps or verbal comments give clear feedback; children are then given time to reflect upon and respond to these. 	<p><u>Speech and Language Link</u> In the first term of starting school children are assessed in order for staff to identify and support children with mild to moderate speech, language and communication needs this may include those new to English. Interventions are then provided to support children’s specific needs. The assessment can also identify children who have more severe language needs such as Developmental Language Disorder so that they can be considered for further investigation and diagnostic assessment with speech and language therapists.</p> <p><u>Reading</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Half termly RWInc phonics assessment. <p><u>Writing</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Half termly adult directed unaided piece of writing <p><u>Maths</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment at the end of each block of teaching. 	<p>End of year EYFS Profile. At the end of the year all children are assessed against the ‘Early Learning Goals’ and a judgement is given as to whether they are ‘Emerging’ or ‘Expected’ in each of the 17 areas of learning. These groups are identified on Target Tracker so that their progress and attainment can be continually monitored in KS1.</p> <p>Foundation Stage teachers then break down these two groups further so that KS1 teachers are really clear where individuals are working within both the emerging and expected bands.</p> <p>Children’s starting point to their final judgement is used to measure progress. This will be considered ‘Not Enough’ ‘Typical’ or ‘Rapid’. This information is shared with Year 1 staff.</p>