

Castle Primary School

Foundation Stage Policy

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to their full potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance.”

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. Castle Primary school admits children into the Reception Class at the beginning of the academic year that the child will reach their fifth birthday; entry into the Nursery Class takes place the term after the child’s third birthday, if they are seeking funding. Therefore, the Foundation Stage refers to the Reception and Nursery class.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon four themes:

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

This policy explains how our practice is underpinned by these four themes.

A Unique Child

At Castle Primary School 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 praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school. All children at Castle Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

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.

In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Welfare

It is important to us that all children in the 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.

"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."

At Castle Primary 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.

At Castle Primary School we:

- Promote the welfare of children.
- Promote good health, including oral health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment are safe and suitable for purpose.
- 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 Castle Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in 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 being partners with them in their child's education through:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school.
- Offering both parents and children the opportunity to spend time in the Foundation Stage before starting school.
- Operating an open door policy for parents with any queries.
- Contributions to children's learning journals from parents.
- Offering three parent/teacher consultation evenings per year.
- Sending a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in the Foundation stage.

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.

Enabling Environments

At Castle Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Foundation Stage staff use observations as the basis for planning. Staff observe children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning.

These observations then lead the direction of the planning. The staff use the children's interests to plan for themes from which the staff draw up medium term plans. In addition to this the children lead the short term activity planning on a day to day basis. This fostering of the children's interests develops a high level of motivation for the children's learning.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations. At the end of their foundation year in school the children's progress is recorded on to the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. Each child's level of development is recorded against the 17 Early Learning Goals within the school tracking system.

The Learning Environment

The Foundation Stage classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely.

There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet, creative etc. The Foundation Stage has its own outdoor area. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. The children can explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant.

Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in Early Years settings.

All 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.

Prime Areas:

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

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Specific Areas:

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

We deliver learning for all of the areas through, purposeful play and learning experiences, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

"Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations.

In their play children learn at their highest level.”

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 and solve problems.

Agreed by Mrs. Jo Jones- Foundation Stage Coordinator

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Next review; April 2026

(If at any time circumstances or situations should change in this subject area the policy will be reviewed earlier).