



The Dove Federation Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

“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, Department for Education, March 2012.

Our Vision

Through a positive caring environment EYFS at The Dove Federation will provide the opportunity for every child to reach their full potential. We embrace Christian values and ensure all children are ready for their next steps.

Within this policy, the term Early Years is used to describe children within the Reception Classes at Parkers and Caston Primary Schools.

EYFS will provide children with a varied and creative curriculum led by pro-active staff who are skilled in moving learning on. By the end of their reception year the children will have the understanding, skills and knowledge to prepare for Year one.

The Reception year must provide every child with a feeling of security, being valued and the confidence to explore new learning. The Reception year is unique in that it can set the tone for later school life.

The EYFS is based on four overarching principles:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.



- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

Aims and Principles

- To ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued.
- To provide a relevant curriculum with tasks that make sense to the children and are both practical and purposeful.
- To provide opportunities for children to engage in activities planned by adults and those that children plan or initiate themselves. Practitioners must consider the individual needs and interests of each child, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience in all areas of learning and development.
- Practitioners acknowledge the holistic nature of young children's learning and natural links will be made between different areas of the curriculum, with the emphasis on learning through play and the importance of developing speaking and listening skills.
- Practitioners must create a learning environment that develops children's imagination and encourages children to explore and express their ideas and feelings.
- Practitioners must respond to each child emerging needs and interests, guiding development through positive interaction.
- Involve parents and carers.

Planning and organising the curriculum

The curriculum for the Early Years forms the first stage of our Whole Federation Curriculum. It covers children in our reception classes at Parkers and Caston Primary School.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must provide a framework for planning, teaching and assessing in early years' settings. All areas of learning and development are inter-connected.

The three prime areas are:



• **Communication and Language** – children will be given lots of opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; to speak and listen in a range of situations.

• **Physical Development** – children will be provided with opportunities to be active and interactive; to develop their co-ordination, control and movement. Children will be taught the importance of physical activity and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

• **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** – help children develop a positive sense of themselves and others; forming positive relationships and develop respect for others; develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and have confidence in their own abilities.

There are also four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied:

- **Literacy** – children will be taught to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children will be given access to a wide range of reading materials to ignite their interest.
- **Mathematics** – children will be provided with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces and measures.
- **Understanding the World** – Children will make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
- **Expressive Arts and Design** – Children will explore and play with a range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.



- The curriculum is planned through a series of topics that are adapted to reflect and respond to the children's interests, offering experiences in all areas of the curriculum and which carry equal importance to provide a broad and balanced curriculum with opportunities for play and child- initiated activities.
- The long-term plan is the Foundation Stage curriculum. This is an overarching framework that informs all other stages of planning. It shows the range of experiences and learning opportunities that are available while children are in the early years.
- Medium term planning takes the form of half termly topics and builds upon the children's interests. It is evaluated weekly to respond to other emerging interests that the children may have.
- Short term plans can select activities and learning objectives from medium term theme plan or can involve objective lead planning. Both methods of planning are deemed appropriate to meet the needs and interests of the children. Plans are extended and differentiated accordingly.
- Planning should challenge the most able children in some cases to exceed Early Learning Goals whilst recognising that an attempt to implement the more formal work before a child is ready could damage a child's disposition to learn.

Classroom Organisation and Resources

The organisation of the classroom reflects the importance that is placed on children learning through play and first-hand experience, developing independence and having opportunities to initiate their own activities.

The Reception classrooms provide the following opportunities.

- Small world resources
- Role play area (sometimes this is outdoors)
- Construction Area
- Book corner with a range of fiction and non-fiction books
- Writing table with a range of writing resources



- Table top and small world toys
- Interactive whiteboard
- Malleable materials
- Musical instruments
- Painting and creative equipment
- Maths games and equipment
- Outside Area – a safe, fenced area including a mud kitchen, sand and water area, a small garden, writing and construction area and tuff spot trays with varied activities to engage the children.

The Reception classrooms at The Dove Federation also have a set of boots and waterproof clothing in order to make full use of the outside area, school field and walks to the wooded areas.

Use of Whole School Resources

- The Reception class use the hall for dance, drama, physical education and collective worship.
- Use of outside field, playground, trim trails and tyre play area.
- The ICT laptop trolley for use in classrooms.
- The musical instruments.
- Library.

Induction

The Dove Federation has several nurseries that feed into our two primary schools. In the Autumn term both Caston Primary School and Parkers Primary School hold an open afternoon inviting the children from local nursery settings in to take part.

After Easter, the Reception teacher will visit the nurseries of the children who are due to start the following September. This provides opportunities to meet the children, play alongside them indoors and outdoors, and to talk to their key workers about their progress.



At the Dove Federation, we also carry out home visits. This enables the reception staff to meet with the parents and child in their own home environment. It enables parents to ask any questions or queries that they have related to their child starting school.

In June, a meeting is held by the Headteacher and Reception teacher to introduce parents/carers to the school, reception procedures and curriculum. Parents/carers are given a school prospectus which outlines the curriculum and school routines, along with a document pack to be completed and returned to school.

After the first initial meeting children are then invited to visit the Reception class to join in with play and share stories and songs for several sessions towards the end of the Summer Term. This is in addition to one induction session alongside the whole school move up days. During these sessions, the children get to experience lunch times and become familiar with the adults who will be with them in September.

When school starts in September, the children start full time and are introduced to the life of the wider school. Familiar adults will remain visible to the children as they are settling in. We encourage the reception children to participate in collective worship as fully as possible and every attempt is made to ensure the children know what to expect.

On starting school, each child will have a Year 6 buddy who will take special care of them during play time and lunchtimes when they first arrive at school.

Involving Parents

Parents/carers are the child's first and most enduring educators. When Parents/carers and practitioners work together in early years' settings, the results have a positive impact on the child's development. A successful partnership needs to be a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise. We aim to develop this by:

- Outlining how the EYFS is being delivered to Parents/carers during the new parents meeting in June, to enable them to understand the value of supporting their child's learning at home and how they can access more information.



- Curriculum letters are sent home periodically to keep parents informed of their child's current curriculum and learning needs, with an outline of activities which could be undertaken at home to support this.
- Sharing progress at Parkers Primary school is through annotated photographs and observations in 'Learning Journeys' which the parents can view half termly, or at their request. Parents record observations and 'Wow moments' to make a record of any special moments or achievements at home.
- Sharing progress at Caston Primary School is through the use of the online journal Tapestry, which provides opportunities for the parents to comment on their child's learning.
- Inviting parents/carers half termly to visit reception class and take part in an activity with their child.
- Discussing individual next steps and progress with parents/carers at parents' evening in Autumn and Spring terms.
- Providing an annual written report to parents/carers in July summarising the child's progress against the early learning goals and EYFS assessment scales.
- All parents will be invited to join the Friends of the School Association at Parkers Primary School which exists to facilitate social occasions so that families can get to know one another and feel part of the school, to raise money to provide extras that enhance the education of all children in school and to contribute to the ethos of the school by providing support for staff e.g. on special occasions by organising refreshments and making new-comers feel welcome.
- Any concerns over special needs will be discussed with parents and the Special Needs Coordinator Marcus Halmshaw (SENCO) for the federation.

Supporting your Reception Child at home

- Early in the first half term at school, children will begin to bring home a book that shows the phonic sounds their child has been learning. This is so that parents/carers can support their child with the sounds he/she has learnt at school. This will be explained in detail at the June meeting for parents.
- The first books that children bring home to share with parents/carers will be picture books and then books with simple repetitive text and rhymes.
- During the year, each child will take home independent reading books that have been shared at school.



- Each child may also take home a range of home learning activities that involve matching sounds and pictures; making, reading and writing simple words, finding shapes, investigating numbers that can be practiced at home.

Health and Well-being

It is important to us that all children are 'safe.'. We aim to educate our 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 skills.

Intimate Care

Where pupils require the support of a member of the class team to complete personal care and intimate care routines, staff will follow procedures as set out in the Personal and intimate care policy and staff handbook. Parent/Carers are always informed

Assessment and Recording

On-going formative assessment is at the heart of early years' practice. At the Dove Federation, this is carried out through short and long observations.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This is in line with the school self-evaluation policy and associated documents.

Roles and Responsibilities beyond the Class Teacher

Teaching Assistant

A TA is assigned to work with the Reception class. It is the TA's role to assist and support the Reception teacher as fully as possible. The TA will work with individuals and groups of children under the direction of the Reception teacher. The TA will be proactive in encouraging development in all areas of learning as well as aiding assessment, administration and enhancing the work space. Input and feedback to the Reception teacher is seen as a vital element in the education of the children.



Head Teacher

The Head teachers' role is to support and challenge the class teachers in order to secure the highest quality education to the children.

Further Policies relating to EYFS

- Safeguarding Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Health and Safety Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Complaints Policy

Documents consulted

- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. (2014)
- EYFS Handbook (2014)
- Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (2012)