



Crowle Primary Academy Foundation Stage Policy



The importance of the Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage (mandatory from September 2008) refers to children from birth to 60 months. Effective practice in the EYFS is built on four guiding themes. They provide a context for the requirements and describe how practitioners should support the development, learning and care of young children. The themes are each broken down into four commitments describing how the principles can be put into practice.

1. A Unique Child recognises that every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. The commitments are focused around development; inclusion; safety; and health and well-being.

2. Positive Relationships describes how children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with carers and/or a key person. The commitments are focused around respect; partnership with carers; supporting learning; and the role of the key person.

3. Enabling Environments explains that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning. The commitments are focused around observation, assessment and planning; support for every child; the learning environment; and the wider context – transitions, continuity, and multi-agency working.

4. Learning and Development recognises that children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates, and that all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected.

Learning and development is organised into seven areas of learning: **Personal, Emotional and Social Development, Communication and Language, Physical Development, Maths, Literacy, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design.**

The Aims of our Foundation Unit

- To recognise and build upon the experiences and skills the child brings to school.
- To create a stimulating and happy learning environment where children feel secure and enjoy learning through first hand experiences.
- To support and value play as an essential vehicle for the children's learning and development.
- To develop the whole child - socially, emotionally, physically, morally and cognitively.
- To ensure equal opportunity for all children, irrespective of religion, gender, ethnic origin, family circumstances or differing abilities.
- To provide support whilst promoting and developing the children's speaking, listening and communication skills.
- To instil confidence and develop independence.
- To use a flexible and adaptable approach to learning.
- To provide a range of opportunities for exploration and discovery.
- To ensure that the outdoor environment is used to its maximum.
- To provide a flexible entitlement that suits the needs of the children and their families.

15 hour Flexible Entitlement in Foundation 1

We offer all of our carers the opportunity to express an interest in sessions which most suit their needs. Initially through a telephone call to the carers to explain their entitlement and the sessions which are being offered. They will then have a period of time to consider which sessions they would most prefer. After this they will be contacted again to discuss their choice. Their preferred session choice will be discussed to ensure that it will meet the needs of the child as well as the carer. The Foundation Leader will then best fit the children into the sessions available. This decision will be subject to the Foundation Leader and Early Years practitioner being happy that it will best suit the child after the home visit. Contracts will then be completed during home visits if possible. Session changes are considered on a termly basis, any changes are subject to availability.

Currently we offer a flexible entitlement which is outlined below. Children can attend;



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- Beginning of the week (Monday and Tuesday 8.30am-3pm, Wednesday 8.30am-11am)
- End of the week (Wednesday 12.30pm-3pm, Thursday and Friday 8.30am-3pm)

A child can access their free place with up to two providers registered with the Local Authority, not exceeding 15 hours per week. These include:

Pre-schools and Playgroups; Day Nurseries; Independent Schools; Nursery Schools and Schools with Nursery Classes.

Transition

We aim for our children to enter school happily and smoothly, and for carers to be comfortable with their child's transition from home to our Foundation Unit and then from our Foundation unit into Year 1. A comprehensive programme is in place to help ensure that the children's admission into our Foundation Unit is a happy experience, which they look forward to with excitement.

Induction Meeting

The term before children are due to start our setting, the Foundation Stage team, along with the Headteacher hold an induction meeting. This meeting gives carers information about the Early Years Foundation Stage including how the foundation unit is set up, times of sessions, uniform, staffing structure and self-care. It will also include information about the curriculum (including assessment), phonics and reading and learning through play both indoors and outdoors.

At the induction evening, each carer is given an information pack containing; times for transition visits, contact names, a leaflet about our sessions and a 'Getting to know you' information booklet (to complete with their child- see appendix 1), the school prospectus can viewed on the website. Carers are also informed about home visits on this evening. At the end of the evening all carers are given the opportunity to go and visit the Foundation Unit with the Foundation Team. This gives opportunities for any unanswered questions to be discussed.

Home Visits

Two members of staff carry out the home visits, one being the child's class teacher when possible. At the home visits, the staff go through appendix 1 with the carer, take a photograph of the child and discuss any specific needs and concerns /queries the carers have on an individual basis. Home visits are very beneficial for the staff to gain an understanding of a child's background and home setting.

Stay and Play

Prior to starting at school the children are offered a number of induction 'Stay and Play' sessions. This gives both the carers and children the opportunity to become familiar with the Foundation Unit and the staff; it also helps to develop positive relationships from the onset.

Induction Programme

The induction programme begins in the term the child is going to start at school. The nursery children are eased into school by a staggered start. Details of this are given at the induction meeting.



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If a child has previously attended another setting it will be arranged for the child/ children to visit the unit with a familiar adult from their current setting the term before they are due to start at school. If necessary our Early Years practitioner will visit the children at their current setting to see them in a familiar environment.

Transition to Year 1

Transition to Year one is of vital importance to ensure that the children settle well into their new class. We have a programme in place which allows the Foundation 2 children to visit their new class teacher and their new classroom for short sessions. Their new (Year 1) teacher will also come and spend time in the unit to see the children in a familiar environment. We also take part in the whole school 'push up' sessions. This is when children spend time with their future teacher. The new and existing class teachers meet to discuss information about transition towards the end of the summer term.

Organisation

In the Foundation Unit there are two members of teaching staff, one of these is the Foundation Stage Leader who is responsible for teaching and learning in the unit. There is also an Early Years Practitioner and one or two Teaching Assistants (dependent on numbers). The children work within coloured groups to denote their sessions in the unit. Each of the coloured groups has one or two key workers, allowing the children to form secure attachments to familiar adults. The groups have separate carpet time sessions and access to free flow provision in and around the unit. The unit has two sets of sound proofed sliding doors which allow carpet times to be a quiet focused time.

A well-organised environment gives the children opportunities to engage in activities planned by adults and for the children to plan or initiate activities themselves. We aim for a child-led curriculum so although termly themes are planned, the children's interests are taken into account and shape the termly learning journey.

Lunchtime Organisation

All the Foundation 2 children eat their lunch in the dining hall with the main school. The children go down to the hall first so that they are settled before the older children arrive. Initially they are supported by a member of staff for the first ten minutes of the lunchtime.

After they have eaten lunch these children go out to play with the Key Stage 1 children on the infant yard. Foundation 2 children have their own lunchtime supervisor.

On full days, Foundation 1 children eat their lunch at school and are supervised by staff that are EYFS trained. They have their lunch in the Foundation Unit. If these children have chosen to have a school lunch it is brought to the room on a trolley and served. The adults help with opening packets, cutting up food, encouraging them to eat and developing their use of cutlery. After they have had their lunch the session resumes in the Foundation unit.

Curriculum

The EYFS is organised into 7 areas of learning, 3 prime areas and 4 specific areas.

Prime areas:

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

Specific areas

- Mathematics
- Literacy
- Understanding of the World
- Creative Development



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Each area of learning contains stages of development in month bands as to what children should be achieving (see the Development matters and Early Years Outcomes documents).

PRIME AREA: Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

This area has three sub sections. These are making relationships, self-confidence and self-awareness and managing feelings and behaviour. The outcomes focus on children learning how to work, play, co-operate with others and function in a group beyond the family. They cover important aspects of personal values and an understanding of self and others. They are encouraged to work independently and to concentrate for extended periods.

PRIME AREA: Communication and Language (C and L)

This is broken down into three sub-sections. These cover listening and attention and understanding and speaking. These outcomes cover important aspects of language development and provide the foundations for literacy. The Early Years Policy places a strong emphasis on children's developing competence in speaking and listening and understanding. Other areas of learning also make a vital contribution to the successful development of literacy.

In play the children are encouraged to interact with each other, to respond to adults and to practise and extend a range of vocabulary and communication skills. The children are taught to listen carefully, showing respect for the views and ideas of others as well as expressing their own opinions clearly. They are encouraged to speak confidently in small and large groups and for a variety of audiences.

PRIME AREA: Physical Development (PD)

This covers both fine and gross motor development and keeping healthy. Physical development is implicit in all areas of the EYFS framework. Teaching concentrates on children's developing physical control, mobility, awareness of space and manipulative skills in indoor and outdoor environments. Positive attitudes are encouraged towards a healthy and active way of life.

SPECIFIC AREA: Maths (M)

This is broken down into two sub section. These are number and shape, space and measures. These outcomes cover important aspects of mathematical understanding and provide the foundation for Mathematics. They focus on achievement through practical activities and using understanding language in the development of simple mathematical ideas. They are taught to use and apply mathematics to real-life situations and encouraged to develop mental strategies for solving a range of problems. Emphasis is placed upon mastering maths, encouraging children to see patterns and relationships in number and enabling them to use their previous knowledge in a new context.

SPECIFIC AREA: Literacy (L)

This area of learning has two sub sections of reading and writing. The objectives ensure success in early reading and writing skills. Phonics plays a big part in this area, the ability to blend for reading and segment for spelling are skills that are promoted daily in the Foundation Stage at Crowle Primary Academy.

Letters and sounds work is taught throughout the unit. In Foundation 1 there are planned sessions in phase 1 phonics which encourage sound discrimination and listening skills. When the children move to Foundation 2 there are planned differentiated daily phonics sessions. Currently the unit follows the Jolly Phonics programme and supplements this with activities from the Letters and Sounds document and other phonics programmes.

We aim to make the children lifelong readers who gain information and real enjoyment from books. They encounter a wide variety of texts including poetry, plays, stories and information. The children are taught a range of strategies to help them read independently with understanding and enjoyment.



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In Foundation 2 practitioners (Teachers and Teaching Assistants) record progress during guided reading sessions. Home reading records are used as a two-way form of communication between practitioners and the carers. Comments are made relating to the progress each child is making and encouragement, suggestions or advice may also be written down. Each week reading records are checked to ensure carers are supporting their child by reading with them three times a week. Messages are written in home school books to carers if a child appears to have had little support with their reading from home

We want the children to be confident writers who enjoy writing for real purposes. The children's early attempts of writing are always valued and praised. They are taught to use a pencil and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters, to write their own names, labels, captions and lists and to form simple sentences. They are encouraged to attempt independent writing for various purposes, for example in role play; making lists, writing about their pictures etc. Initially children are taught to form individual letters, then in cursive script if appropriate.

SPECIFIC AREA: Understanding the World (U the W)

This covers the subjects geography, science, DT, history, RE and ICT. This is a major area of learning and enquiry and focuses on children's developing knowledge and understanding of their environment, other people and features of the natural and made world. It provides a foundation for historical, geographical, scientific and technological learning. Children are also involved in cultural and praise celebrations, where respect for themselves and differences in others are valued and celebrated. Children investigate objects and materials using all their senses as appropriate. Activities are based on first hand experiences whenever possible, to encourage exploration, observation, problem solving, prediction, critical thinking and discussion.

SPECIFIC AREA: Expressive Arts and Design (CD)

This covers art, music and drama. This area of the EYFS framework focuses on the development of children's imagination and their ability to communicate and to express ideas and feelings in creative ways.

Creativity is fundamental to successful learning. It provides opportunities for children to make connections between one area of learning and another and so extend their understanding. The children are encouraged to express and communicate their ideas and feelings through art, music, dance, role-play and imaginative play. They are given the opportunity to explore colour, texture, shape, form and space in two and three dimensions. They are given opportunities to listen to and appreciate a range of music. The children are encouraged to explore sounds for themselves; to recognise repeating sounds and patterns; to sing songs from memory and to match movement to music.

Characteristics of learning

The characteristics of effective learning describe factors which play a central role in a child's learning and in becoming effective learner. They are vital elements of support for the transition process from EYFS to Year 1. The characteristics of learning run through and underpin all seven areas of learning and development, representing processes rather than outcomes. Information describing the child's characteristics of effective learning will provide Year 1 teachers with vital background and context when considering the child's next stage of development and future learning needs.

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



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- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

Creating and thinking critically – thinking

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things

Indoor and Outdoor Resources

The learning environment is planned effectively to meet the requirements of all areas of learning. It will be well organised into clearly-defined areas. The areas will include:

- An attractive and comfortable place to read
- Sand with a variety of equipment
- Water with equipment
- Small world
- Construction
- Fine and gross motor
- Mathematical and scientific equipment
- Writing areas with a variety of paper and tools to mark, make or write
- Imaginative play area
- A variety of creative media such as paint, clay, wood and junk materials
- Growing resources
- Collections of interesting objects to handle
- A variety of outdoor play equipment
- Baking materials and equipment are available when needed
- ICT equipment including; interactive smart boards, laptops, BeeBots and remote control characters and I pads
- A sleeping area (when required)

These areas are in zones around the unit which allows the children to become confident in selecting and finding resources in their play. It encourages the children to tidy up correctly and give them a sense of familiarity within the unit.

All areas will be attractive and suitably resourced so that children are encouraged to use them and engage in purposeful, challenging activities with or without the presence of an adult. Resources will be organised in such a way that children are enabled to make informed choices, select independently what they need and take responsibility for clearing away.

In addition to these areas we also offer a cafe style snack. During snack times the children are able to independently access milk, water and a selection of fruit.

Additional resources used as enhancements or for variety are stored in one of the units' stockrooms. These are only to be accessed by the adults in the unit. Outdoor play equipment is stored in the garage on the foundation stage playground and in the child accessible sheds around the outdoor area.

We ensure that the resources we provide:

- Reflect children's varied home and community experiences
- Reflect the multi-cultural nature of the UK



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- Avoid gender stereotyping

Outdoor Learning

Great emphasis is placed on ensuring that the outdoor learning environment contributes to all areas of learning. All children will be encouraged to take part in the full range of outdoor experiences.

Children should have access to the total learning environment in and out of doors for a substantial part of each session. Our outdoor area incorporates a variety of different surfaces including; grass, bark, artificial grass and large sand pits.

Resources outdoors and indoors will be organised similarly to enable children to be independent and take responsibility. Different sheds around the unit are denoted by signs. These store different equipment dependent on the area of learning. Children are encouraged to freely access resources from the open sheds. This garage is only accessed by the adults in the unit. During a session that involves wheeled toys they are parked by the fencing when not in use.

Learning and Teaching

In order to promote effective learning the teaching will provide opportunities and experiences for children to:

- Have access to a wide range of opportunities and experiences which will allow them to explore investigate, discover, create, practise, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate their knowledge skills and understanding
- Imitate activities that promote learning and enable them to learn from one another
- Have time to explore ideas and interest in depth
- Feel secure in order to become confident learners
- Make links to other areas of learning
- Undertake creative and imaginative play activities that promote the development and use of language

The staff will:

- Work in partnership with each other, parents, carers and the community
- Promote children's learning through planned experiences and activities that are challenging but achievable
- Adapt opportunities and planning to match children's interests at the time
- Teach skills and knowledge
- Understand that children learn in different ways and at a different pace to each other
- Use rich and varied language to help children develop linguistic structures for thinking
- Plan both indoor and outdoor provision to maximise opportunities for children's learning
- Adapt activities and make changes to planning and provision to support children's interests and needs

Behaviour Management

Foundation stage staff follow the whole school behaviour policy and behaviour management is consistent throughout the unit. All staff use positive praise to focus on good behaviour. We do this by rewarding with; praise, smiles, stickers and praise pad letters.

If sanctions are needed to support the child's behaviour follow the procedure listed below;

1. Give the child a warning about their specific behaviour.
2. Give the child a warning about the behaviour explaining that if they choose not to do what is been asked that will mean that they will be choosing to watch the timer.
3. If behaviour continues the child is told that they have to watch a timer (and why) and think about their behaviour. They then sit and think about their behaviour while watching the appropriate timer.



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4. After the timer has finished the member of staff goes to talk to them about their behaviour and they are asked to apologise.
5. If behaviour continues to be a concern the child's key worker is then informed and they will take appropriate action e.g. speak to child/ carers / foundation leader.
6. Foundation Leader will inform Headteacher of any major concerns.

Planning

The long term plan is based around the provision of all the play areas. Medium term plans are very flexible in order for them to be adapted to meet children's interests. These are devised with the learning outcomes to ensure coverage of the curriculum. Short term plans are completed on a weekly basis to ensure adaptations can be made in accordance with children's needs and interests. Medium and short term plans are often adapted and modified to account for the changing needs and interests of the children. We feel that this is vitally important. We ensure that we make the most of all situations as they arise e.g. it snows or a carer has a new baby.

The foundation staff meet weekly to discuss provision and planning enhancements to ensure the needs and interests of the children are met. Training, SEN, care and concern discussions, assessment and moderation are also covered during these times.

Assessment

Children in the Foundation 1 are assessed on entry to the unit (approximately 6 weeks in).

Additionally, the children are assessed throughout the year against their progress towards the Early Learning Goals using the Development Matters and Early Years Outcomes documents. Each child's characteristics of learning are also considered. This information allows us to inform our future planning and take into account any gaps which seem to be developing.

An 'online learning journey' is created for each child and includes examples of activities and ongoing observations and assessments, covering all seven areas of learning and their characteristics of learning. The online learning journey can be accessed and added to by parents. Each child will also have a book for literacy work and a book for maths work. All assessment is based on evidence, which is collected in a number of ways, including:

- Observations of children carried out by the teachers, Early Years Practitioners and Teaching Assistants
- Outcomes of conversations between staff and children and between the children themselves
- Assessment of the work children have produced
- Conversations with carers

The children's progress is constantly monitored and assessed in all areas of learning. Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the units practise and makes a substantial impact on children's learning. Observation is a crucial tool during the Foundation Stage. Incidental and formal observation of each child are completed throughout the year and added to their learning journey. A tracker is used to ensure all children are observed and to show in what areas they have been observed in.

By asking the children questions, listening to them talking, looking at their work and play, we are able to monitor their progress and identify where additional assistance or help is needed and plan accordingly. It allows for us to decide the best next steps for the child/ children. Target groups are identified and extra support is given.



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The information which we collect is then taken with evidence to termly moderating cluster meetings. At these meetings judgments in one of the areas of learning are discussed and moderated.

A formal report detailing children's progress and attainment towards the Early Learning Goals is sent home annually.

Expectations

For most children, the end of the reception year will be the end of the Foundation Stage, where the expectation is that children will achieve the expected level of the early learning goals in the prime areas and the specific areas (maths and literacy). Although the Early Learning Goals are intended for children at the end of reception, younger children will be provided with experiences which will support them in reaching the goals at times appropriate to them and opportunities are provided for children who are on track to exceed the Early Learning Goals.

Continuity and progression

It is expected that full implementation of EYFS seven areas of learning will ensure continuity and progression across the stage and with Key Stage 1. Children should be enabled to make a smooth transition towards the english and maths lessons in Year 1, by the end of the reception year.

Inclusion

Planning will meet the needs of both boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children with disabilities, children from all social, cultural and religious backgrounds, children from different ethnic groups including travellers, refugees and asylum seekers and children from diverse linguistic backgrounds. Our Foundation Unit uses opportunities to positively teach about differences through story, circle time, smart board presentations and varied resources.

For those children with special educational needs, the focus will be on removing barriers and on preventing learning difficulties developing. Children's learning difficulties will be identified at an early stage and teaching will respond quickly to areas of difficulty. This will involve working closely with the SENCO and carers to develop an effective strategy to meet these needs. This may involve working with staff from other agencies.

Links with Parents/Carers

We recognise that parents, carers and extended family significantly influence children's learning and development. We seek to develop an effective partnership between home and school.

- Parents/ Carers are welcome to approach class teachers about any queries, concerns or problems relating to their children
- Carer/Teacher consultations are held twice a year
- Parents/ Carers receive an annual report
- We welcome the support of police cleared carers in the classroom, on educational visits and in extracurricular activities
- Each morning there are always two members of staff available to talk to for 10 minutes before school starts
- The use of stickers and purple wrist bands gives carers an insight into things their child has done well. Informal discussions each night occur between carers and staff members
- Home school books keep parents, carers, family members, other settings up to date with any events, concerns, achievements and interests that the child might be showing
- Weekly posts on the app inform parents of the children's learning and enables messages to be sent to groups of children

Links with the community



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The Foundation Unit welcomes and encourages links with the community. We have regular visits from the Fire Brigade, Police, the School nurse and the Vicar. We also engage with the local community through other activities i.e. the local residential home at Christmas and sing Carols and Christmas songs to the residents.

Links with the Children's Centre

The Isle of Axholme North Children's Centre is based on the school site. The Foundation leader has up to date information about activities and support which can be accessed from the children's centre and regularly signposts parents/carers to appropriate sessions.

Leadership and management

Priorities relating to the Foundation Stage will be identified in the Academy's developing excellence plan as appropriate. The Foundation Stage Leader is part of the school's Senior Leadership Team which allows the Foundation Stage priorities to be driven forward.

Relevant staff training and development needs will be outlined in the developing excellence plan.

It is expected that all staff and governors are aware of the requirements of the Foundation Stage and the importance of the key stage in relation to the children's learning and its impact on raising standards across the school.

Evaluation and Review of the Policy

We aim to regularly evaluate this policy and review it as stated except where Government or LA changes necessitate an earlier review or where a request has come from the Governors or Headteacher.

*Written by: Cheryl Pearce
FS1*