



Seven Mills Primary School Early Years and Foundation Stage Policy

Aims of the Early Years and Foundation Stage:

We want all children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to feel safe, secure and cared for in a stimulating environment; and for parents and carers to work closely with staff and be fully involved in their children's learning. We want all children to build positive relationships, learn to respect others and to develop the social skills necessary for the world in which we live. We strive to ensure that all children in our care reach their full potential as confident, independent learners.

- **Admission procedures:**

The Early Years and Foundation Stage currently has 30 full time places in each of two year groups – Nursery and Reception. Parents can put their child's name on the Nursery waiting list after their second birthday. Children will be admitted in one September intake in accordance with the **Tower Hamlets Admissions Policy for the Early Years and Foundation Stage**. Children joining the Nursery must be 3 years old by 1 September of the year in which they enter the Nursery; children joining Reception must be 4 by 1 September of the year in which they join Reception. In 2018 applications for Nursery places should be made **directly to the school**; applications for Reception places should be made **online** to Tower Hamlets School Admissions. The school can support any parents who would like help in making their applications for Reception places from school admissions – please let the office know and we will arrange an appointment.

When a child has been offered a place, parents will be notified of dates when they can make pre-visits to the school. All parents or carers are also invited to a meeting where they will have opportunities to meet the Early Years staff

and complete the relevant paperwork necessary for starting school. At this meeting our policy of settling Nursery children into school will be explained. (See also *Starting School at Seven Mills* booklet on the school website.)

- **Organisation, roles and responsibilities:**

The Early Years and Foundation Stage is divided into two areas: Nursery Class and Reception Class. Nursery age children are admitted into the Nursery the September after their third birthday and the Reception children start in the reception class the September after their fourth birthday. The Nursery Class is situated in the main school and has its own separate entrance on Malabar Street. The Reception children are located alongside Key Stage 1 classes in the main school.

Staff ratios are in accordance with the statutory guidance for the Early Years and Foundation Stage. The Nursery is staffed by one fully qualified teacher, one full-time nursery nurse and the full-time equivalent of one teaching assistant. There is also a midday mealtime supervisor in the Nursery.

The Reception class is staffed by one fully-qualified teacher and the equivalent of at least one full-time teaching assistant. There are additional hours of teaching assistant support every day depending upon specific needs. The whole Early Years and Foundation Stage also benefits from a language support teacher who works closely in both classes.

School starts at 8.55am and the Nursery children will enter and be dismissed from the Nursery entrance. For safeguarding reasons parents and carers are not allowed to walk through the library to enter the main school. Reception aged children will enter and be dismissed from the playground (outside) door of their classroom. School ends for Nursery children at 3.20 pm, and for Reception children at 3.30 pm. For safety reasons parents or carers will not be allowed into the Reception classroom or Nursery at the end of the day until all of the children have been dismissed. Children must be brought to school and collected by a person over the age of 16 unless a written request is made to the head teacher for alternative arrangements to be made.

- **Lunchtimes:**

The Reception aged children will eat their lunch in the main dining hall with the Key Stage one children.

Nursery children have their lunch in a small dining room off the hall. For both classes the school operates a 'family sitting' where staff sit with the children, encouraging them to use their cutlery correctly and to make sensible food choices. Foundation stage children are not allowed to go home for dinner and are encouraged not to bring a packed lunch from home unless there are extenuating circumstances.

Please note, all Reception aged children receive a school meal without payment under the national Infant meals scheme. However, Nursery children must pay for their school meals at a cost of £1.90 per day, ***unless their parents are in receipt of benefits which would entitle them to free school meals***. If you think your child may be entitled to a free school meal, please speak to the parent support worker or office staff in confidence.

- **Nursery working parents:**

Although the school provides full-time Nursery education (30+ hours per week), it only receives funding for 15 hours of provision per pupil. The shortfall is currently made up from the general school budgets. However, if parents are working for more than 16 hours per week, the school may be entitled to claim additional funding for their child's Nursery education. If you think you may be eligible for this funding, please speak to the parent support worker or office staff in confidence.

- **Teaching and learning:**

We aim to provide our children with a broad and balanced curriculum that is accessible to all and takes into account the social, cultural and linguistic diversity of the area that we work in. We embrace children's individuality and are aware that all children develop at different stages - we believe in individualised learning to support this. Staff carefully plan and re-evaluate learning environments so that they stimulate the children and provide them with opportunities to explore and investigate. Space is organized into clearly defined areas of learning where resources and equipment are easily accessible to the children. Space is divided into the following areas:

- Carpet area
- Reading corner/listening area
- Writing area
- Imaginative play area
- Maths/Technology area
- Discovery area
- ICT area
- Creative area
- Outdoor play area

- **The importance of play:**

We strongly believe in a play-based curriculum where children are in control of their own learning. Staff carefully plan all activities with clear learning intentions and the children are encouraged to develop skills of creativity, problem solving, reasoning and conflict resolution. The children are continually being observed in all areas of learning and these observations are used to inform teachers' planning and next steps. Staff model various skills during short carpet sessions and adult-initiated group work. The length of these sessions is dependent on the children's needs, but older children have slightly more structured sessions than their younger counterparts.

We strongly believe in the importance of outdoor play, and all of our children have access to the outside area at various times throughout the day. Our outdoor area is seen as an extension to the classroom and is carefully planned for on a daily basis. Children are asked to leave a pair of wellington boots at school so they can play outside whatever the weather.

- **The Early Years and Foundation Stage Curriculum:**

In the Early Years and Foundation Stage, we follow "*The Statutory framework for early years and foundation stage*," (April 2017) and also the themes and principles of '*Development Matters*'(2012) guidance material to support children's learning and development. We plan, observe and assess using the '*Characteristics of Effective Learning*' which move through all areas of a child's learning.

The **Prime** areas develop quickly in response to relationships and experiences and are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language

- Physical Development

The **Specific** areas include the essential skills and knowledge which include:

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

In each area consideration is given to children's individual needs and the practical requirements for the Early Years and Foundation Stage curriculum. Staff plan using a topic-based approach.

All children will be encouraged to take part in structured adult-initiated activities and these will vary on the ability of the child and the desired outcome of the activity. The Reception aged children will follow a more structured routine that incorporates daily literacy, maths and phonics sessions but still has a strong play focus. It is intended that on transfer to Year 1 each child will have had the sufficient experience and gained enough knowledge and confidence to adapt and thrive within their new environment and routine.

The balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities is reviewed regularly in light of each child's individual needs.

- **Record keeping, observation and assessment:**

Early Years and Foundation Stage staff meet on a regular basis to reassess classroom organisation, provision and planning and to discuss individual children's needs and experiences. Staff are also aware of the need to evaluate their own practice and good practice is shared and discussed. At various points of the year staff will moderate individual children's profiles to ensure consistency of approach and expectation.

The Nursery children are closely monitored and observed during the settling-in process and 5 day records are kept on each child. After their first seven weeks at school an initial assessment is carried out on every child and they are plotted and linked to a developmental stage in line with guidance from Tower Hamlets Early Years team. Every child in the Early Years Foundation Stage has an early learning development record where their progress is closely tracked and monitored through observations, photographs and samples of work. These

observations are shared among the staff and used to aid planning and the children's next steps.

Every child has their own special book where annotated pieces of work and photographs are kept. These books show the children's learning journey throughout their time in the Early Years and Foundation Stage and are presented to parents and children at the end of the year.

Assessment data for every child is put onto a tracking sheet, and this tracking sheet is continued through the Reception year and clearly shows individual children's progress throughout the Early Years and Foundation Stage. At the end of the Reception year, the data is collated and used to complete Early Learning Profiles for each child. This information is passed on to the Local Education Authority and is also shared with the Year One teacher to ensure continuity, progression and to aid in the transition process from the Early Years and Foundation Stage into Key Stage One.

- **Planning:**

Staff carefully plan and evaluate all activities that take place in the foundation stage.

- ***Curriculum Map for the Year*** - The foundation stage has its own curriculum framework in line with the rest of the school. This outlines the topics for each term and any specific visits that may take place.
- ***Termly Overview*** - Termly plans are completed and are carefully linked to specific topics and areas of learning. These plans have a very cross curricular focus.
- ***Short term / daily plans*** - Weekly plans link specific activities to learning objectives in all of the six areas of learning. These plans include opportunities for whole class, adult initiated and independent activities and focus on differentiation and opportunities for ongoing observations to inform future planning and assessment.

- **Links with parents:**

The foundation stage staff acknowledge that parents have a fundamental role in their child's education and aim to develop a partnership based on shared responsibility, understanding, dialogue and mutual respect. Staff recognise the role that parents and carers have already played in the early education of their child and that their continued involvement is crucial to successful learning and development. We ask all parents of new children to the foundation stage to

play an active role in settling their child into the new setting, and parents are expected to support our settling in policy.

Parent consultation evenings are held in the autumn and spring terms for all Early Years and Foundation Stage parents to attend. They provide opportunities for staff to share children's progress and for parents and carers to discuss any concerns they may have. At the end of each academic year written reports are sent home detailing progress throughout the year. Pupils also contribute to these reports themselves starting pupil voice at an early stage.

- **Equal opportunity and inclusion:**

The Early Years and Foundation stage is taught in accordance with the school's equalities policy. All children are encouraged to respect people of different ethnic, social and cultural groups and to develop positive attitudes towards gender and ability.

- **Children with Special Educational Needs:**

The Early Years and Foundation stage is taught in accordance with the school's SEN policy. Staff also highlight specific children throughout the year who may need support in making relationships or taking part in daily activities appropriately. Programmes of additional support are developed for any children who may need help in making relationships or taking part in daily activities appropriately.

Revised November 2017

Policy agreed by governors on:

Signed by:(Headteacher)

Signed by:(On behalf of governors)