



Foundation Stage Policy

Date approved	7th February 2008	Version	2
Revised			
Author/Owner	Curriculum Committee		

1. Purposes

- 1.1 There are four main purposes to this policy:
- to establish an entitlement for all children within the Foundation Stage
 - to establish expectations for all staff working with children in the Foundation Stage
 - to stage the school's approaches to the Foundation Stage curriculum in order to promote parents and carers understanding of the curriculum
 - to promote continuity and coherence across the Foundation Stage

2. Introduction

- 2.1 The Foundation Stage and early years learning goals, introduced in September 2000, refers to children in nursery and reception classes. This is a distinct key stage, where children could enter at three years old and leave at the end of their reception year. The Foundation Stage curriculum is organised into six areas of learning:
- creative development;
 - physical development;
 - personal, social and emotional development;
 - knowledge and understanding of the world;
 - communication language and literacy;
 - mathematics.
- 2.2 Each area of learning has specific strands and these match subject areas of knowledge as detailed in national curriculum documentation.

3. Expectations

- 3.1 For the majority of children the end of the reception year will be the end of the Foundation Stage and the start of the national curriculum requirements. The expectation is that at St Thomas Primary School the staff will work to ensure that the majority of children will achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year.

4. Aims

- 4.1 The curriculum for the Foundation Stage should underpin all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and development children's:
- personal, social and emotional well-being;
 - positive attitudes and dispositions towards learning;
 - social skills;
 - attention skills;
 - perseverance;

- language and communication;
- reading and writing;
- mathematics;
- knowledge and understanding of the world;
- physical development;
- creative development.

5. Equal Opportunities and inclusion

5.1 In our school we believe that all 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, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. Some children progress beyond this point. 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.

5.2 We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge,
- experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary. This involves speech therapy for some children and close liaison with the SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator).

6. Organisation

6.1 The learning environment both in and out of doors will be well planned. It will be well organised into clearly defined areas, including:

- an attractive and comfortable place to read;
- sand, dry and wet, with a variety of equipment;
- water, with appropriate equipment;
- a writing area with a variety of paper and tools with which to make marks or write;
- an imaginative play area;
- a variety of creative media such as paint, clay, wood and reclaimed materials;
- baking materials and equipment;
- an area in which to grow things;
- collections of interesting objects to handle;
- a variety of outdoor play equipment

- 6.2 All areas will be attractively resourced and presented, so that children are drawn to them and engage in purposeful, challenging activity with or without the presence of an adult. Resources will be organised in such a way that children are enabled to make informed choices, independently selecting what they need and taking responsibility for clearing away. Children should be able to relate personally to the resources available, in that they reflect children's varied home and community experiences. Resources should also reflect the multi-cultural nature of this country.

7. Learning Outdoors

- 7.1 We place great emphasis on the purpose of the outdoor environment. Children should have access to the total learning environment in and out of doors for a substantial part of each school week. Resources should be organised in a similar way both indoors and outdoors so that children can retain independence and responsibility. All children need to be encouraged to take part in the full range of outdoor experiences.

8. Assessment

- 8.1 We will use a range of assessment strategies to ensure that the next steps in children's learning are appropriately planned in order to help children make progress. We will identify assessment opportunities in planning and seek opportunities for:
- skilful and well planned observations of children;
 - working partnerships with parents
 - evaluating the quality of provision, and practitioners training needs;
 - ensuring our baseline assessment is informed by observations, discussion and evaluation in line with our curriculum.

9. Leadership and Management

- 9.1 The Foundation and Key Stage 1 Co-ordinator will be responsible to the Headteacher for the management of the Foundation Stage. Management roles and responsibilities will be reviewed annually and in line with performance management. The Co-ordinator will manage a specific budget where appropriate. Relevant staff training needs will be identified and dealt with appropriately.
- 9.2 It is important that all staff and Governors are aware of the requirement of the Foundation Stage and the importance of the key stage in relation to the continuation of children's learning at St Thomas Primary School.

10. The Role of Parents and Carers

- 10.1 St Thomas Primary School staff all acknowledge the importance of the partnership between the school and the home. Parents and carers have a crucial role in the education and development of their children. They also need to know how the school works and the vision and philosophy which underpin the learning environment at St Thomas Primary School, which in themselves make the school unique. To this end the following processes have been developed:
- the term before the children start school there is an eight-week induction programme for both children and parents/carers. This consists of an afternoon a week where the children meet other peers in their intake, work

and play together in their intended learning environment, and meet their teacher and support worker;

- parents/carers also undertake an eight-week programme with members of the teaching and support staff, where they discuss the school's approach to a variety of learning situations. Parents also discuss their anxieties around starting school and take part in discussions with each other;
- the Foundation Stage Profile is used to record teachers' ongoing observations and assessments over all six areas of learning in the '*Curriculum Guidance for The Foundation Stage*'. Complete profiles will be used to inform parents/carers and subsequent teachers about each child's progress and learning needs;
- during the reception year there are regular afternoons after school where parents/carers are invited to see the learning environment, and to celebrate their child's achievements.

11. Review

- 11.1 This policy will be reviewed every two years, and amended after discussion with staff and Governors as necessary.

12. Document History

2	Reviewed, amended and approved by Curriculum Committee (7th Feb 2008)
1.1	Updated and reformatted by Clerk (23rd January 2008)
1	Previous version approved by Curriculum Committee (November 2002)