



***‘Together we nurture the seeds for success’***

Subject:	Early Years Foundation Stage Policy
Issue date:	September 2022

## **Safeguarding Statement:**

At Foley Infant Academy, we respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn, in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by or invited to deliver services at Foley Infant Academy. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access school and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

## **Intent:**

The Early Years Foundation Policy at Foley Infant Academy has been developed by all Early Years staff and Senior Management of the school. The period from age three to the end of the reception year is described as the foundation stage. It is a distinct stage and important both in its own right and in preparing children for later schooling. The Teacher Assessment frameworks are designed to be used to assess the children accurately and guide them onto the next steps in their learning through the progression of skills and knowledge. At Foley Infant Academy we pride ourselves on building a good relationship with parents and other adults in outside supporting agencies. These may include therapists, health visitors, Educational Psychologists and school nurses. By creating a supportive culture and adhering to advice given by outside agencies, we can meet the needs of all children in our care.

## **Implementation:**

### **The child as a learner**

At Foley Infant Academy, most children enter the foundation stage at an 'expected level of development' but with a varied level of experiences, understanding and maturity. The aim of the Early Years Curriculum at Foley Infant Academy is to nurture and build upon children's natural energy, enthusiasm, curiosity, and sense of humour as well as giving children the experiences needed to develop holistically. Young children learn predominately through playing individually or co-operatively in small groups and, therefore, structured, planned play is the medium through which the Early Years Curriculum at Foley will predominantly be delivered.

The children at Foley Infant Academy enjoy a tailored curriculum that aims to fulfil each child's interests, develop their cultural capital and build upon their prior knowledge to develop their own knowledge of key concepts. A spiral curriculum is used where prior learning opportunities are encouraged through play, exploring and key focused learning opportunities which are carefully planned for throughout English, Maths and Topic focused lessons.

Our documentation at Foley Infant Academy includes:

- EYFS Progression of skills and knowledge – a demonstration of how skills and knowledge are developed in our setting and is used to support all children, no matter what their starting point.

- EYFS Continuum – opportunities for continual learning, sharing examples and expectations of how the environment evolves across the academic year.
- Long-Term Overview – an overview of learning across the academic year highlighting the key skills and knowledge with suggested learning opportunities in the environment.
- Medium-Term Planning- A summary of each topic across the academic year, skills accessed and specific focus areas, based on the progression of individuals.
- EYFS progression of vocabulary- progression of clear focused vocabulary for Nursery and Reception children based on the learning topics linked to the foundation subjects across Key stage one.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is mandatory for all schools and early years providers in Ofsted registered settings attended by young children i.e. from birth to the end of the academic year in which a child has their fifth birthday. Throughout the Early Years curriculum there are four key underpinning principles that all staff and practitioners endeavour to follow throughout their daily practice. The four themes are: A Unique Child, Positive Relationships, Enabling Environments, Learning and Development.

### **A Unique Child**

**Over arching principle:** every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

At Foley Infant Academy, we ensure that all staff are respectful of all children and their families. During the initial settling in period for new children, we ensure we listen attentively to all, taking sensitive observations and develop an awareness of their individual learning styles. Staff carefully plan activities to scaffold, support and stretch children using practical and abstract resources. Through child- initiated play, children can feel safe, secure and valued in their learning environment.

### **Positive Relationships**

**Over arching principle:** children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.

Foley Infant Academy prioritises the need for stable, safe and secure relationships with all children. Teachers take the time to form good relationships with children and their families through an ‘open door’ policy and regular parent’s meetings to communicate with parents well. Using the ‘evidence me’ application parents can share the observations and their child’s learning through regular feedback and a weekly shared observation. Reception also use home school reading journals to communicate effectively with any concerns between practitioners and parents.

At Foley Infant Academy, forming positive relationships with the village community is vital to ensure parents’ trust is built between professionals and the local area.

### **Enabling Environments**

**Over Arching Principle:** children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

Through structured routines and visual timetable, the children feel safe and secure in their learning environment as children are aware of the next steps in their school day. Once positive relationships have been established between all professionals and the children in our care, children begin to access the learning environments and opportunities to ensure children progress to achieve a good level of development. Children are open to a carefully planned and structured learning environment with high quality resources for open ended learning and possibilities. Following the use of our all about me leaflet, practitioners are aware of any interests, needs and wants of each individual child before they enter the classroom and can offer them a curriculum and teaching that matches each child's individual needs. Throughout the use of child-initiated time and focused learning opportunities children can access resources that develop the skills needed and taught during carpet inputs. Using carefully scaffolded resources and our marking policy; support, scaffold, standard and stretch, the children have their learning enhanced and developed according to their individual needs and assessment opportunities.

Through the development of the learning environment, children can access indoor and outdoor classrooms and are able to move between these areas with support of well-trained staff. Using carefully planned activities in our outdoor learning planning, children can freely choose these outdoor learning opportunities to develop those skills and enrich each child's learning experiences. For example, children choose to role play different scenarios such as a teddy bear's picnic, construct large animal dens, mark make their own superhero books, use bicycles and tricycles and have a range of mark making materials such as chalk and paint sticks to develop a love of writing.

In addition to this, each child has a weekly forest school session to develop a curiosity around the world and explore the natural environment. Children can investigate natural resources such as fir cones, leaves, sticks and log slices to develop their counting skills/ mark making and sights, smells, sounds and textures. Children can search for minibeasts, build log fires, make bird feeders and make flower crowns. Please see our Forest School policy at [Foleyacademy.com](http://Foleyacademy.com).

To promote the love of reading, children are offered relaxing, colourful and calming book corners to ensure children have a range of non-fiction and fiction books to access. Children develop their own independence when accessing a range of stories and genres. Practitioners alternate the books available for children to ensure they can reflect on the learning topic or theme and any real life experiences the children may be experiencing such as 'new sibling' or 'starting school' at the beginning of the year.

Throughout the different learning areas such as our Maths area, Art area and Mark making/ writing area children can access a range of resources such as paint sticks, ribbon, googly eyes, different coloured card/ paper, stampers, sound mats and book templates to allow their own choice of task through child-initiated choosing time. Through these welcoming learning environments children will develop their own reasoning/ problem solving skills and independence as they choose a particular strategy to produce a desired outcome.

### **Learning and Development**

**Over Arching Principle:** importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates.

Through rigorous assessment and conversations with pupils, teachers and practitioners are aware of the ability and needs of all children. With a supportive senior leadership team,

conversations with the Senco and an importance on teaching and learning, children make good progress through scaffolded resources and differentiated activities and support are in place.

As well as all these key principles being intertwined into our curriculum, these are all underpinned by the characteristics of effective learning- Playing and exploring, Active Learning and creating and thinking critically.

In line with the Early Years framework, all children access the seven areas of learning and 17 sub areas which are intertwined within cross curricular activities and learn to develop their cultural capital awareness. This further supports the development of key life skills to prepare each child for their future school career and adulthood.

### **Communication and Language**

Communication and Language plays a vital role in our curriculum. Using a vocabulary bag to unpick new vocabulary from a new text, praise for using new vocabulary such as house points and good modelling of language from practitioners in the learning environment the children's language and communication progresses well. Children are encouraged to use well-formed sentences throughout their play and learning opportunities. Further to this, staff use the ECAT (every child a talker) strategy to develop each child's language skills. Through daily story time sessions, children are introduced to new vocabulary to utilise in their writing, speaking and oracy.

### **Physical Development**

Following the Early Years Statutory framework, children develop their fine and gross motor skills through daily learning opportunities and free choice activities. By having a 'busy fingers' table children are consistently required to develop their wrist strength and correctly form letters in later writing activities. By starting with sensory explorations such as pasta, coloured rice and shaving foam, children begin to use paintbrushes, rollers, toothbrushes and smaller writing apparatus to develop the key underlying skills before writing and forming letters with a pencil. Furthermore, children have regular dough disco sessions to develop the muscles in each hand to encourage the correct pencil grasp and pressure needed. Children then develop the control, precision and hand- eye coordination which is later linked to early Literacy.

Gross motor skills are fundamental in promoting healthy bodies, exercise and teach children to lead healthy lives. With a regular Pure Sports P.E. coach to teach our P.E. weekly, children take part in team games, balancing using apparatus, activities which develop a range of movements such as jumping, crawling and running and dance movements which links to our expressive arts and design curriculum. Through regular feedback and the use of resources such as hoops, bean bags, scooters and bicycles children can regularly develop these larger movements and increase their self-esteem.

### **Personal, Social, Emotional Development**

Children's social, emotional development is crucial for the well being of all children at Foley Infant Academy and we always aim to ensure that the holistic child feels emotionally safe and secure and can manage their own emotions effectively. Children begin to follow rules and expectations, build positive relationships and resolve conflicts within the learning environment. Children who struggle to regulate their own emotions independently will learn to co-regulate this with a member of staff and have access to additional resources such as a calming corner or

workstation to regulate these effectively. Furthermore, children will learn how to accept other's opinions, share their own views and accept others' beliefs.

### **Literacy**

At Foley Infant Academy, children are encouraged daily to develop a love of reading and writing. Children are given daily opportunities to develop the early fine motor skills for writing as well as developing comprehensive sentences and enhance their own passion for writing. Through our writing areas in our classroom children are encouraged to complete child-initiated tasks such as writing a booklet about superheroes, or a list of ingredients needed for their teddy bear's picnic. They are provided with a range of resources such as sand, glitter, sound mats, foam and rice to support their multi-sensory approach and emergent writing.

Children have focused adult led guided reading groups where they read a levelled Oxford Owl book as well as being exposed to high quality learning journey texts on a one-to-two-week basis as part of our focus Literacy learning opportunities. Children also can access a range of texts in our reading gardens within a range of genres such as non-fiction, fiction and poetry. In Nursery, our children are taught phase 1 activities such as instrumental sounds, listening walks and sound discrimination using instruments. This supports the skills needed for the children to begin their 'Floppy Phonics' journey in the Summer term and in Reception, to recognise the sounds and blend these together to support the reading process.

### **Mathematics**

At Foley Infant Academy, children foster an interest and curious approach in their Maths journey. Children enjoy problem solving, identifying different representations of number, counting and number recognition. Through carefully planned Maths inputs following the 'Power Maths' scheme of work, practitioners make adaptations to ensure that all individual needs are met. Children then can access the mathematics learning opportunities to practise and apply the skills they have been taught in the main input. We continue to apply the Number strand through everyday counting opportunities when counting the children in the class, shape of the day and number of the week opportunities. Children also have free access to a range of practical resources such as counters, cubes, Unifix, conkers and number stones. Therefore, children have the opportunity to apply the Maths skills during child- initiated time.

### **Understanding the world**

At Foley Infant Academy, we have a clear passion for the natural world and exploring the outdoor leafy and natural environments. We promote an appreciation of all natural resources and the world around us. Our topic themes have been developed with a keen focus on building the foundations for exploring the natural world in preparation for Year 1 Geography and History links. Children have the opportunity, with weekly forest school sessions, to develop a resilience and perseverance when den building, identifying mini-beasts and helping to look after our EYFS chickens in our outdoor area. In addition to this, we provide children with unique opportunities and develop a relationship with our village community by visiting the fire station, library and having visits from the local police officers and visits from people in different occupations such as a dental nurse. We have also developed our awareness of different cultures and religions through a visit from the local priest in our church community.

### **Expressive Arts and Design**

In Early Years, children are exposed to a wide range of opportunities to explore their artistic skills and develop those design skills well. We use mixed media across both Nursery and Reception in any form – examples include paint, pasta, pom poms, stickers, natural materials and many more. Children are also provided with a wide range of opportunities to explore the Arts, initially through role-play and retelling stories using puppets and small world objects, before evolving into productions and musical performances.

### **Parent Partnership at Foley**

At Foley Infant Academy, the partnership between parents and staff is vital to ensure all the children in our care develop well and are supported in the learning process. We aim for all parents to feel valued and confident in their knowledge of their child's learning. Through regular homework sent out weekly, parents evenings and Evidence me (to log individual observations to be shared with parents and vice versa) we ensure parents are aware of their child's learning experiences. Giving children the opportunity to share their home life experiences ensures that children feel valued and therefore practitioners have an awareness of the holistic child.

### **Transition to Reception and Year 1**

To ensure smooth transition between Nursery and Reception, the Early Years lead and the senior leadership team will visit the local playgroup and the local day nursery to ensure children and parents feel prepared for the transition into the next year. During Summer 2, new parents are invited into school for an induction evening to explain key information regarding staffing, environments and safeguarding procedures. All parents are given an information pack with an 'all about me' leaflet to complete with their child to ensure staff are aware of the child's current interests and passions. Furthermore, parents are supported with school readiness activities to prepare them for the start of their learning journey in Reception.

To ensure smooth transition into Year 1, teachers will regularly meet to discuss individual needs and transition notes for each child in their class. In Summer term, children take part in domino days to ease transition within the setting whereby children visit the Year 1 classroom and meet their new teacher. Year 1 teachers are made aware of the current cohort of children and their individual needs to adapt the curriculum where required.

### **Effective Assessment and Identifying individual needs.**

Prior to children starting, staff spend time speaking to the child's parents, previous settings and gaining any further understanding of the child as an individual and their next steps. During the first three weeks in both Nursery and Reception, all staff use ongoing assessments, observations and conversations with the child to develop a baseline assessment. This goes alongside the Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment provided by the Government for children in Reception.

Using our Welcomm program, children are regularly screened against age related expectations in accordance with the program and score amber, red or green to assess their understanding, listening and attention. Once the children are screened, children take part in regular targeted group interventions to support their listening, attention and understanding skills. Children are regularly assessed at the end of every term or following the child's individual needs to establish if they are at age related expectations for these skills. Using regular ongoing observations during the first half term, children are given targeted speech and language interventions which include communication and listening attention games. Children are monitored continuously throughout the year and children who need further support from a speech and language therapist will be



discussed during pupil progress meetings and with the Senco and parents. Children who are already using a speech and language programme will be regularly assessed throughout the year and will work with a speech and language therapist to administer targeted interventions weekly.

In Reception and Nursery, we utilise the Evidence Me application whereby we can share observations and 'wow' moments of each child once a week with parents. We also use this for parents to share their own special moments which they are particularly proud of. In addition, the children have Maths and Phonics folders to track any evidence of a particular learning opportunity and writing assessments book to track progression of writing across the year.

At the end of each half term children are assessed on the sounds they have been taught and placed on a phonics tracker. This can then help identify the children that need further support or targeted interventions.

In Summer Term of Reception, the EYFS Profile will be completed for each child. This provides parents and carers, practitioners, and leaders with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels and their readiness for Year 1. The profile is moderated internally and in partnership with other schools within our Multi-Academy Trust, to ensure consistent assessment judgements.

### **Impact:**

Following our curriculum and the pedagogy of all staff working with SLE's from the Manor Multi-Academy Trust, children leave our Early years foundation stage with a good cultural, social and emotional awareness. We aim for all children to develop holistically as well rounded individuals to develop their love of learning across their academic career and through their lives. By following our Early Years curriculum, we feel that children are able to build positive relationships, demonstrate our core values and have a passion for learning in preparation for the Key stage one curriculum.

At Foley Infant Academy, by placing the child at the importance of everything we do, we feel the children leave us as versatile individuals ready to tackle and overcome challenges in the world as well as achieving great success.

### **Review:**

This policy will be reviewed **every 2 years** by subject leads, SLT and Governors.

The Governors may however review the policy earlier than this if Government introduce new regulations or if the Governing Body receive recommendations about how the policy may be improved.