La Mare de Carteret Primary School

Foundation Stage policy

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Our Vision at La Mare de Carteret Primary School:



LMDCP working together with the entire community to ensure the rights of the child are met by providing a safe, nurturing and challenging education

Aims of the policy

To enable all children to realise their full potential in a happy, safe, healthy and stimulating environment. We feel that the Reception year should be an exciting and happy time for all children. In line with Guernsey's curriculum statement we aim to ensure our children become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens. Children who experience high quality early years education are well placed to be successful throughout their school life and beyond.

Our Early Years Foundation Stage policy will help us to focus on sustaining a consistent, high quality learning environment and will help us to ensure that the four outcomes of the Children and Young People's Plan 2016 are achieved. All children in our care will:

- Be Included and Respected.
- Be Safe and Nurtured.
- Achieve individual and economic potential.
- Be Healthy and Active.

Principles of the policy

To ensure strong, effective leadership in securing and improving quality.
To inspire children to want to learn.
To support the natural inquisitive nature of children and their thirst for learning.
To support children's understanding of the school's 'Learning Principles' .
To ensure learning happens at the right time for each child.

We will also uphold the four guiding principles of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2014)[2] which will help shape practice. These are:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, adaptable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships.**
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments** which are safe and promote positive health and well-being. There is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents.
- **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.** The framework covers the education and care of all children, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Foundation Stage Leader has responsibility for the Foundation Stage.
Every teacher is responsible for planning a creative and engaging curriculum that is safe, challenging and accessible to all learners.
Every learner should be able to have a say in what and how they learn.
Every parent and carer should be informed about the curriculum.

Transition from Pre-school to School

We recognise that children learn best when they feel happy and safe and when they have positive relationships with those caring for them. We invest time in building those relationships with children and carers and the process of transition starts in the spring term before children start school. Children, along with their parents and carers, are invited to attend after-school sessions, as well as some sessions during school time. During these sessions children have the opportunity to play with their new classmates and to meet their teachers. We also offer information workshops for parents and carers giving an insight into different aspects of school life. The Reception class teachers make contact with pre-school settings in the summer term (through visits, telephone calls or the 'speed dating' session organised by the SEYT) - this is so information can be shared about the children joining us in September.

Reception children have a phased entry into school, in line with guidelines from the Education Service (summer born children start first, followed by spring and autumn born children). Teachers and Learning Support Assistants work together to share their observations and assessments of the children during this settling-in phase. This information then helps practitioners to plan interesting and relevant activities to help the children make progress in their learning. We recognise that children develop in different ways and at different rates, so there is always flexibility in our planning. At the end of the first half-term, a Foundation Stage Profile 'benchmark' score is recorded in SIMs.

To ensure that the transition from home to school is gradual and best suits the child, there may be circumstances when it is more appropriate for a child to attend school for a period of part-time sessions. This decision is taken in consultation with parents/carers, Reception staff and Senior Leadership.

Learning and Development

To help develop a lifelong love of learning, we introduce the children to a wide range of interesting (often challenging) experiences. Our planning is based on seasonal activities and children's interests. Planning is flexible to allow the children to take advantage of unexpected learning opportunities.

Our curriculum is based on seven areas of learning as outlined in *Development Matters*: the Statutory Guidance for the EYFS (2014).

The Prime Areas are Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language and Physical Development. We recognise that children should have a good level of development in these Prime Areas before developing the Specific Areas of Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World, Expressive Arts and Design.

What children learn is significant, but **how** children learn is vital in ensuring they have the life skills to progress through their education. The characteristics of effective learning are:

- **PLAYING AND EXPLORING – Engagement**

  Finding out, investigating and exploring
  Playing with what they know
  Being willing to 'have a go'

- **ACTIVE LEARNING – Motivation**

  Being involved and concentrating
  Being able to keep trying when things are difficult
  Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

- **CREATING AND CRITICALLY THINKING - Thinking**

  Having and developing their own ideas
  Making links between ideas
  Developing and choosing strategies for doing things

We aim to deliver a varied curriculum which meets the needs of the whole child. Reception teachers plan an overview of each term, which shows when special activities and events will take place. Weekly plans show suggested activities and the skills and knowledge that will be taught. Phonic work follows the *Letters and Sounds* scheme and separate plans for Maths are introduced when appropriate. Teaching may be whole class, groups or on an individual basis.

We recognise the importance of play in the early years. Children are experiencing and learning in the here and now and it is in the moments of curiosity or challenge - 'the teachable moments'- that a skilful adult makes a difference. With this thought in mind, we aim to have a mix of child initiated and teacher directed activities based on observations of children's interests and aptitudes.

"By using this cycle on a moment-by-moment basis, the adult will be always alert to individual children (observation), always thinking about what it tells us about the child's thinking (assessment), and always ready to respond by using appropriate strategies at the right moment to support children's well-being and learning (planning for the next moment)." (DfCSF, QCDA, Learning, Playing and Interacting: Good Practice in the Early Years Foundation Stage, (2009) Page 24).

We recognise that the learning environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development. We aim for children to have access to outdoor space, as well as indoor space, and we regularly review our continuous provision (which encourages children to select activities independently and provides open-ended opportunities for children to develop activities in their own way). These activities may be enhanced by members of the Reception team, as appropriate, to develop children's learning.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Throughout the Reception year, practitioners' observations and assessments provide the evidence that is needed to complete the child's EYFS profile. Evidence may be collated on paper or in an electronic format - eg Evidence for Learning app. The Development Matters document is used to give a benchmark score (recorded in SIMs in the autumn term and in February) following guidelines from the Education Service. A final score is given in the summer term when children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals – the skills expected across the seventeen aspects of learning for a child at the end of the Reception year. The assessment is a judgement to indicate if a child is working at the level of the Early Learning Goal (Expected), if they are working towards the ELG (Emerging) or are working beyond the ELG (Exceeded). Teachers attend moderation training and follow the guidance given by the Education Service to ensure their judgements of attainment is consistent with those judgements made in other Island schools and across other jurisdictions, including the UK.

Parents and carers are invited to attend meetings prior to their child starting school in September, again in the autumn term (to discuss how the child has settled into school life) and again in the spring term. Parents are invited to share their child's learning through the Evidence for Learning app, 'Book Looks' and open afternoons and 'Stay and Play' sessions. There may be times throughout the year when parents are invited into school to discuss any aspect of their child's progress or development. At the end of the year, a written report is produced for each child, showing their aptitudes, achievements and targets to work on. The written report, along with the child's Learning Journey, provides a summary of their achievements throughout the year.

Transition to Year 1

We are keen to make the transition from the Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 as smooth as possible. With this in mind, we provide opportunities for the Reception children to get to know their new classrooms and teachers through story swap sessions and the school's transition programme. Reception teachers meet with Year 1 teachers to discuss the children and their progress before they move on.

Inclusion

Practitioners will ensure that all children have equal access to the curriculum, regardless of race or gender. Those children requiring differentiated work, or who have special needs, will be accommodated according to their needs. School has good links with outside agencies (such as the Speech and Language Therapy Service, School Nurse, CAS etc). Please refer to the Inclusion Policy.

Role of the Foundation Stage Leader

Lead and develop the team of teachers and LSAs.
Collate and analyse data (Benchmark, February and end of year data) and plan accordingly.
Visit prospective pupils in their pre-school settings and liaise with pre-schools when necessary.
Organise Pre school transition programme after February half term
Prepare materials for New Parents Welcome Pack.
Organise and present at New Parents' evening
Order resources when required.
Attend courses and early years meetings.
Keep up-to-date with current research and good practice.
Provide INSET for staff as appropriate.
Review and update policy document.

Review of policy
This policy will be reviewed by the Foundation Stage Leader and Senior Leadership in response to Island initiatives, or in 2021, whichever comes first.